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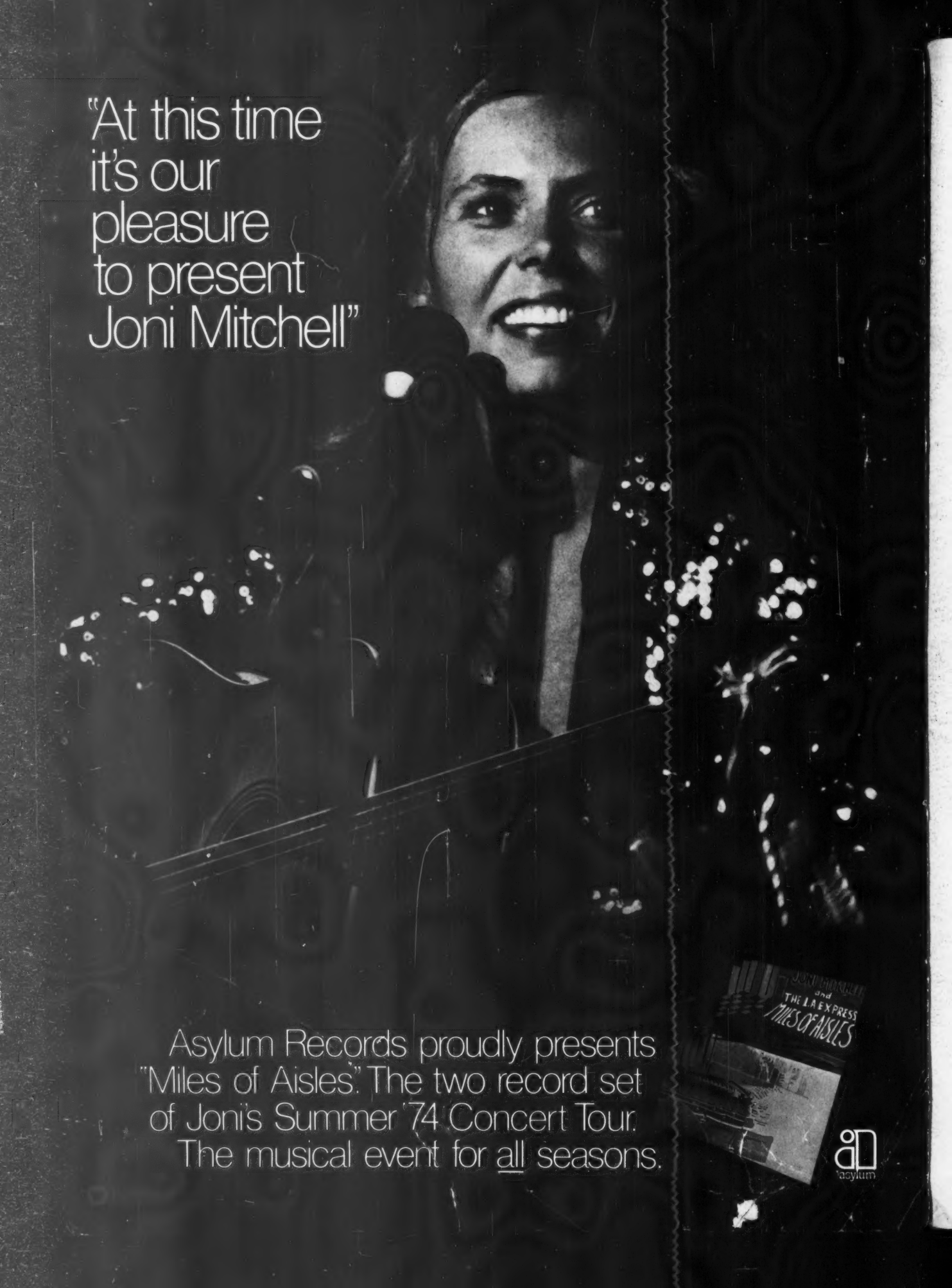

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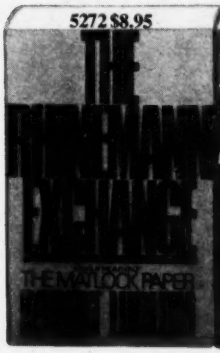

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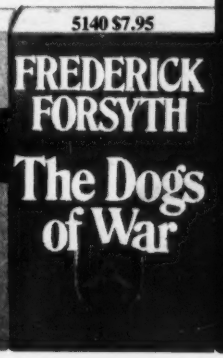

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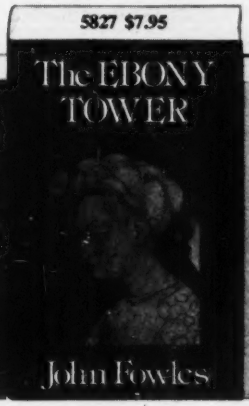

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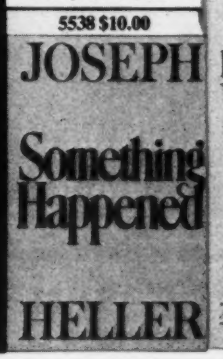

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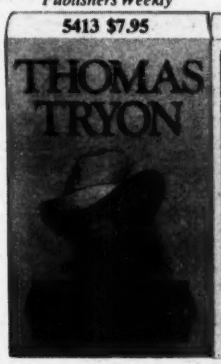

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NEW TIMES, January 10, 1975, Volume 4, Number 1

TOP OF THE NEWS

Citizen Loeb *From the publisher of the Manchester, N.H., Union Leader, making somebody like Ed Muskie cry is the least we can expect in '76* **By Robert Sam Anson** 14

Corporate Cover-up *Major companies are so adept at juggling figures that virtually no one—including the tax man—can figure out how much profit they are making. Which is exactly the point . . . .* **By Ann Crittenden** 24

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California children *The kids who talk, don't know, the kids who know don't talk. Still, they are different, and there are ways of finding out how different* **By Carolyn See** 34

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The Iowa experience *The Fiction Workshop is a pressure cooker of raw creativity set down in the middle of a prairie, where competition and envy and spleen and angelic flights of inspiration abound. A former Iowa City resident looks back* **By Gail Godwin** 48

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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY DICKRAN PALULIAN

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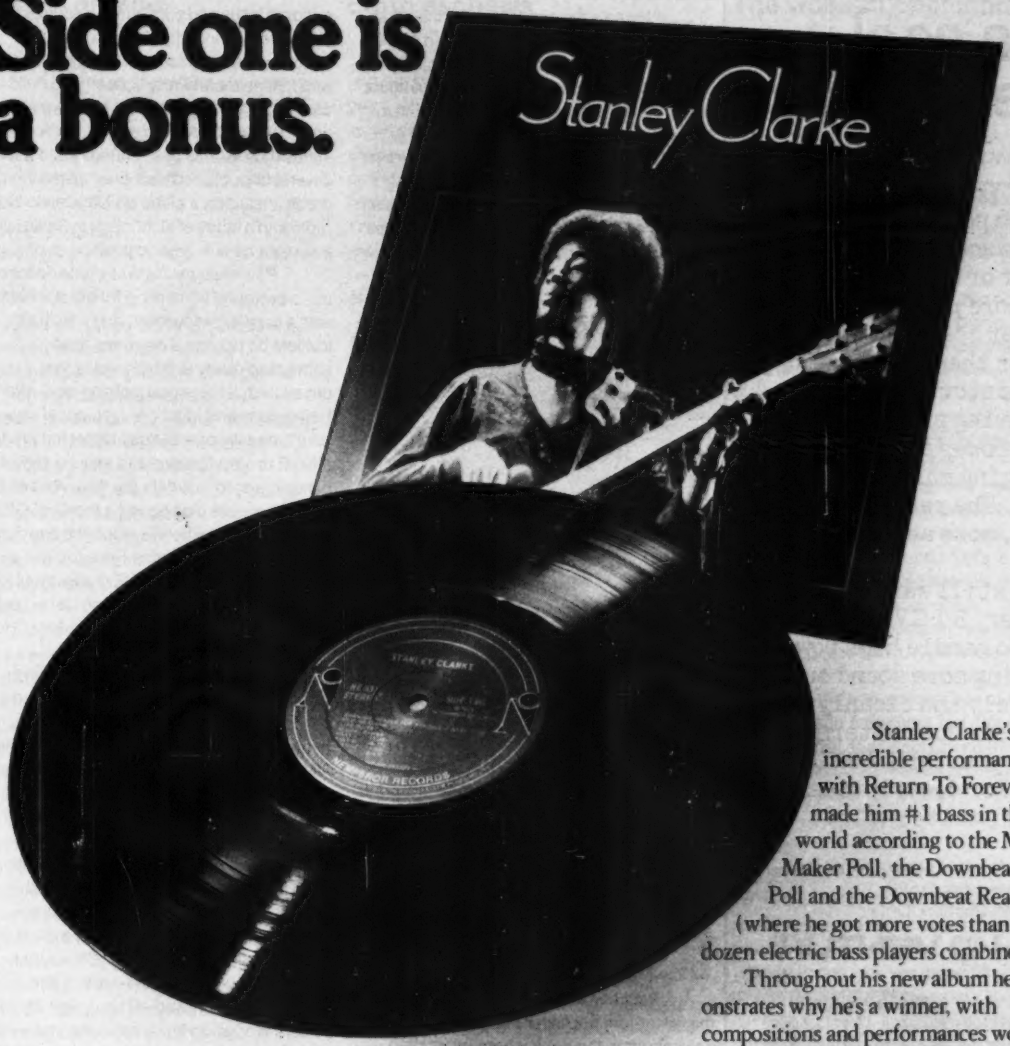

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BEHIND THE SCENES

"Nixon's the one," says Paul Slansky, whose Review of 1974 is his seventh piece for *New Times*. "Without the inspiration that he provided, I might still be working in a liquor store." (He is still working—part time—in a liquor store.)

"Nixon was the best president we ever had," Slansky states boldly—"from a humorist's point of view, that is. There was so much to work with: the blatant lies, the false piety, the paranoia—and best of all, those incredible Freudian slips that made him his own worst enemy."

Paul began his journalistic career as the editor and publisher and sole writer for a newspaper at the bank where he worked while attending C.C.N.Y. The contents of the paper, however, restricted its potential readership to three trustworthy friends. Watergate got him to reach out for a larger audience.

"About a year ago I was discussing the whole thing with some editors from *Time* and *Newsweek*—liquor customers of mine—and I realized that I was more familiar with the details of the story than they were. I decided to put my expertise to use."

Paul's first piece, an imaginary post-impeachment Nixon press conference, was rejected by us and subsequently appeared in *Crawdaddy*. Since then, he has worked almost exclusively for *New Times*, starting with "Republican Party Jokes" and continuing through the recent "Dear Jerry" and "TV Guile." Although his work for *New Times* thus far has been humorous, Paul has several unpublished "serious" pieces to his credit, including a piece on New York rock radio and a study of alcoholism in Riverdale—a subject he is in a good position to observe.

Paul explains his Watergate obsession as "a profound admiration for great theater. It was a superb production, down to the lowliest bit players. There was always something ready to fill any voids that developed. If there was nothing new with the Haldemans and Mitchells, you could count on a Connally or a Gurney to get indicted, or a Korff to step forward and make a fool of himself, just to maintain the flow. And all the while, the walls closing in on the Oval Office.

"I was in Phoenix when the end came. The next day the Arizona *Republic* ran a eulogistical editorial titled 'Exit a Patriot.' Next to this column, the daily cartoon lashed out at tax cheaters ('We Bear Their Burden'). How can a satirist improve on that?"

The 1972 election left Paul in low spirits—he says he didn't expect to read a newspaper for four years. However, hindsight has given him a new perspective. "If I had had any inkling of the spree we were in store for," he says, "I'd have voted for Nixon myself."

* * *

Despite the rumors and insidious whispering that the novel is dead, Gail Godwin writes serious fiction—and very successfully, too. After several years as both a student and a teacher at the country's premier school for writers—which she describes in this issue—Godwin left the Iowa Writers Workshop firmly believing that writing can be taught. And no wonder. Her novels, *The Perfectionists* (1970), *Glass People* (1972) and, most recently, *The Odd Woman*, have invariably been greeted by rave reviews, lending further glory to the Iowa Workshop legend. Now living in upstate New York, Godwin is, naturally, hard at work on a new book.

George A. Hirsch

LETTERS

Grass is greener

It's about time some significant publication balanced all the anti-pot hysteria we've been getting recently, especially from network television news. Richard Lance Christie's article ("Attention: smoking grass may be good for your health," December 13) was excellent. Thanks.

Fred N. Breukelman
Dover, Delaware

Richard Lance Christie's article was superb and adds a greatly needed perspective to a complex and controversial area. Regardless of the merits of the conflicting studies on marijuana, however, it should be remembered that the need for decriminalization is not based on the premise that marijuana use is harmless but rather on the immense human, fiscal and social costs of the present criminal approach and on such cherished American values as personal choice and the right to privacy.

Last year, over 420,000 Americans were arrested on marijuana charges, more than 95,000 in California alone. Surveys indicate that over 90 percent of these arrests were for simple possession of small amounts for personal use. Estimates on the annual cost of enforcement of these archaic laws are in the range of $600 million.

As long as dubious scientific research claims are used to justify the criminalization and incarceration of thousands of Americans annually, both users and potential users will reject governmental warnings as the subterfuge they often are. For 40 years the government, particularly its law enforcement agencies, has wailed about the dangers of marijuana, yet use and arrests continue to rise.

The time has now come to pursue a more humane and rational course. Education based on honest, scientific facts, and not moralizing and hyperbole, is what is needed. A policy of discouragement is both wise and appropriate, but discouragement should not be confused with coercion, and there are better teachers in our society than nightsticks and jailers.

Gordon S. Brownell
West Coast Coordinator
National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

Earth eschews

Three years ago I bought my first pair of Earth Shoes ("Slow Down," November 29). I still wear them all the time, never had to have them resoled, and they are in fine shape. A week ago I met a guy who had a new pair. The front was ripped and the leather was the consistency of cardboard. The sole was made not from the old stuff they used to use from Europe but from crepe, which is like walking on pencil erasers!

It seems obvious that Earth Shoes are another victim of savage capitalism—exploiting the walkers. From now on, call them Earth Eschews.

Andrea Jay
Staten Island, New York

What is write?

If, as Geoffrey Wolff writes in his nastily phrased book review (November 29) of Richard Kostelanetz's *End of Intelligent Writing*, literary grasping and sneering have not provoked many cries for reform, then perhaps it is time that someone *did* say something. Cabalism and self-service are surely no more indigenous to the literary terrain than to any other professional terrain. Pound did not bully new boys. And old boys such as T.S. Eliot and Ford Madox Ford were known to help out-of-towners. So was Joyce, who managed to get Italo Svevo an audience. Wolff seems to think that Kostelanetz is calling for nothing short of a genetic reversal. Not so.

Joan Acocella
New York City

Since it is impossible to operate an accidental whorehouse, the attention paid Richard Kostelanetz's *The End of Intelligent Writing* had to be because 1) the book is somehow dangerous and must be discredited, 2) slaughterhouse reviewing is good for circulation, or 3) establishment publishers are notified your "radicalism" is simply another pose and you're really on their side after all.

There is no doubt that "the oldest profession" is profitable. It is, however, seldom regarded as honorable.

Robert R. Miles
San Pedro, California

Ed. Note: "their" side?

The woes of publishing

Your article entitled "The End of the Cash Advance," which appeared on page 14 of your December 27 issue, must establish a record for journalistic inaccuracy. Never have I seen so many misstatements crammed into such a small space.

In addition to misspelling my name, the writer says that I called Harper & Row editors together for "what had been billed as a tough talk." I did no such thing. There was no such meeting or talk. He also quoted me as "predicting that many publishers would go under." I made no such statement. The writer says, "With rare exception, no new books would be accepted for publication." Nonsense. One could go on, but why give wider currency to a number of equally absurd and untrue assertions. . . .

The fact of the matter is that Harper & Row has never been in stronger financial condition. Our cash balance is substantially higher than a year ago; our debt is substantially lower. We have just raised our dividend on the common stock. . . .

But more importantly, we are attempting (successfully) to avoid the wild gyrations of others in this industry with respect to the size and number of author advances and publishing lists. We plan to move steadily ahead publishing the best authors and books we can find—just as we have for the last 157 years.

Winthrop Knowlton
President
Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Ed. Note: Our apologies for the misspelling. As for the rest, our source within Harper & Row still confirms that you did in fact give a belt-tightening talk. We did not say or mean to imply that Harper & Row is a company already in the red; instead, we were underlining your own in-house comments about the difficulties that the publishing industry as a whole faces during the present recession.

Correction: in James Real's article on California hill dwellers (Nov. 29) the text read: ". . . Mid-Mountain colony, a community of 1,600 primitive homes scattered about 2,000 acres of thinly populated mountains . . ." Clearly, 1,600 homes on 2,000 acres would be suburbia, not thinly populated mountains. Somehow, between Real's manuscript and the printer, two zeroes were added. The culprit is still at large.

Why did you get drunk on New Year's Eve?

SLOW DOWN

By James S. Kunen

As you sit, on 1-1-75, nursing a head that feels as though Anita Bryant had squeezed it for juice, you can be forgiven for wondering, WHY DID YOU GET DRUNK ON NEW YEAR'S EVE?

Having studied Chandler Washburne's writings on alcohol and E.O. James' book on seasonal festivals, I am prepared to answer, gently and quietly, this complex, but not impenetrable, question.

You got drunk because you ingested large amounts of ethanol, a central nervous system depressant that in large doses impairs the function of the more highly developed regions of the brain, resulting in impaired psychomotor ability, decreased binocular fusion, decreased cognitive functioning and an alteration of feelings about oneself and one's environment. The effects are similar to those of withholding oxygen.

Ah, but you didn't mean *why* in the sense of mechanistic causality. You were interested in *why* more in the motivational sense.

Well, you chose to get drunk because getting drunk offers certain rewards.

Alcohol tends to dispel fear and anxiety, lower inhibitions and release tension, allowing "disinhibited impulses to manifest themselves in behavior," as they say in expert-ise. You become less sensitive to stimuli, including stimuli arising from your own behavior. This decrease in awareness may lead you toward the "self-less" state so highly touted by lysergic Buddhists, T.M.ers, Krishna people—the Orient Express crowd.

When I drink I usually battle the effects of the booze, and unfortunately make a pretty good account of myself. Refusing to flow with the tide of alcohol, I maintain a sodden sobriety, light-headed and heavy-limbed, at great expense of energy managing to cling to the humdrum level of existence rather than effortlessly accepting transcendence of it.

However, on those rare occasions when I do get drunk, I become like the drink—fluid. There's more "give" to me. My outlines become less rigid, and I conform to the contours of the situation. As I grow less defined, there is a melding of self into all, which allows me to gaze at myself in the mirror behind a bar with the detachment of someone looking at a stranger, and accept him with the boundless tolerance of one inebriate for another.

A particular way in which your awareness is narrowed—or focused, to put it more positively—is in the area of memory. When you are drunk, you can remember better than when sober things you learned the last time you were drunk; but beyond that, you forget things.

This tends to make you live in the present, a tendency that is abetted by another of alcohol's effects—the loss of a sense of elapsed time. Reinforcing these effects is group pressure—prevalent in drinking situations—*not* to bring up anything about future responsibilities or obligations which might interfere with the enjoyment of the moment. The abrogation of all ties and demands beyond the present eradicates any forces pulling the drinkers apart, and fosters enhanced sociability and a sense of group solidarity. Alcohol is thus a vanquisher of loneliness.

If you have read carefully to this point, you understand that the ingestion of alcohol leads to drunkeness, and that drunkeness is its own reward. There remains to be explained only why you chose New Year's Eve to do yourself this favor, when you knew you had to get up the next day and face a long hard *annum*.

For one thing, the alcohol was there for you to drink. Throughout the world, alcohol is served to ensure attendance at rituals and other important events.

Another thing—you knew you were expected to get drunk, and people usually try to do what's expected of them.

But most important, New Year's Eve is an occasion fraught with tension.

It's common knowledge that New Year's Eve is depressing, but the *cause* of the depression is widely thought to be the pathetic attempt of utterly socialized, tame, well brought-up individuals to achieve a level of debauchery that is beyond their reach. The opposite is the case. We strive for irresponsibility and excess *because* we are depressed to begin with.

The winter solstice is a frightening time. It reminds you that you are going to die. The darkness and cold remind you, and the ticking off of another year reminds you.

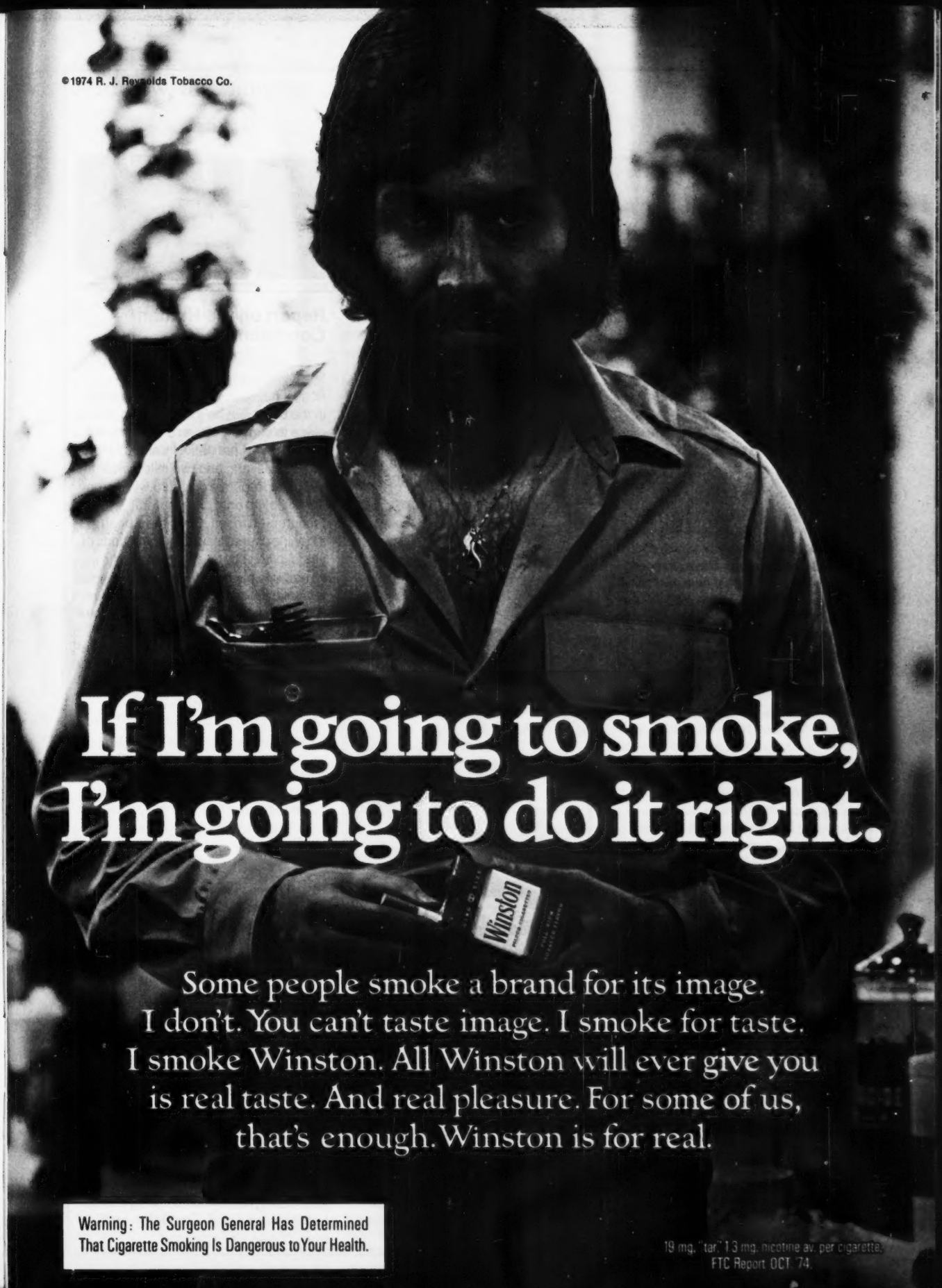
"From time immemorial the turn of the year in mid-winter had been the occasion of rites of passage as a precaution against the supernatural forces thought to be then rampant, and to ensure the renewal of the waning power of the sun," E.O. James explains.

The Romans got through it with the Saturnalia, seven days of complete blow-out. The Jewish winter festivals were marked by "excessive drinking," "unrestrained ribaldry," noisemaking to drive away evil influences and the lighting of lights. Christmas was set at December 25 specifically because the Church had been unable to suppress celebrations of the solstice, and it absorbed many of the pagan seasonal customs, such as the decoration of houses with greenery and lights, and feasting and carousing.

You got drunk on New Year's Eve to carry on the most ancient sacred traditions of man. You did the right thing. The sun will return. It will be warm again. Your headache will go away.

Happy New Year. ●

ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH SMITH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Some people smoke a brand for its image. I don't. You can't taste image. I smoke for taste. I smoke Winston. All Winston will ever give you is real taste. And real pleasure. For some of us, that's enough. Winston is for real.
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.
19 mg. "tar" 1.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report OCT. '74.

CLIPPINGS

Data Data

Computers have become so numerous that an Illinois University professor, Martha Williams, is proposing a data bank on data banks.—from Zodiac News Service

Un-bonnie Bra

Among complaints to the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Chicago was one in which a woman claimed she lost her job as a machine operator because she worked without a bra. The employer said she posed a "health hazard." Sheldon Summers, an investigator for the commission, said, "An actual on-sight investigation has been made and in [this] case the investigator found that the woman's breasts could not get caught in the machinery." She had, Summers said, "an average sized bust."—from the New York *Post*

Going To Bat for Daley

One would not think Mayor Daley of Chicago would need a petition endorsing his candicacy for another term, but one was circulating on the South Side, so Ann Peters, 23, signed it. That's when the trouble began. Her husband Lionel, 46, whom she said had been in "an argumentative mood all day," charged that she had not even read the petition. That made Ann mad. After he fell asleep, according to police, she picked up a baseball bat and beat him to death in his bed.—from the Chicago *Sun Times*

Classified

JEWISH LESBIAN VEGETARIANS FOR JESUS seek others to form group; preferably in Park Slope. Call Elsie or Sybil, 797-3301.
—from *The Majority Report*

NOTIFICATION IMPERATIVE—UFO'S

Anyone accused of hallucination, who faces brain surgery, electroshocks, mental hospitals, please call U.S. Admiral Carl Stillman, Dr. Daniel Fry, U.S. Ambassador Attache Nagorka, Baltimore, Md. (301) 322-8529 or local 1-462-9738.
—from the Boston *Phoenix*

RESEARCH SUBJECTS NEEDED

PREMATURE Ejaculation treatment study, must have partner. Sliding fee. N.P.I. 825-0243(140515).
—from the UCLA *Daily Bruin*

Daring Semi-escape

A couple of young convicted thieves, Allen Lucket and Michael Malone, were cleaning up a penthouse on top of the jail in Los Angeles, when they decided they'd had enough. They kicked a lock off the penthouse door, got out on the roof, and found a long electric cord. They hitched it to a beam and dropped as far as the tenth floor ledge when the cord played out. That's where they spent the next hour or so, safe, but Jesus, what a rotten mattress. The ledge was padded with 14 inches of pigeon shit. The thieves were booked on a charge of attempting to escape *after* they had a shower and got clean uniforms.

Report on the Human Condition: 1974

Roy DeGorogore, who lives on a tiny Pacific island that is one of the richest nations on earth, has $1 million in the bank. But he's still worried. No place to sensibly spend or invest that money on his hot native island that is three miles long and two miles wide. In 1990 the Republic of Nauru will dig up the last of its one, great natural resource—birdshit. Birds have been stopping over at Nauru for thousands of years, piling up the stuff that slowly turned into phosphate, a valuable fertilizer. When the guano is gone, Nauru will have no economy. What does that mean to 3,700 Nauruans, most of whom are dedicated to hedonism (eating, drinking, roaring around on Hondas) and eschewing any form of work (3,000 Gilbert Islanders and Chinese dig the guano for them)? "I'm 53 years old and I can't go back to eating coconuts," said DeGorogore. "I grew up here in poverty and now we have all this money. Many people think the money is just for fun. They do not think ahead to when the guano is gone."—from the Los Angeles *Times*

Oink

When Jane Chastain teamed with two men to broadcast the Denver Bronco-New Orleans Saints football game, the switchboard at Denver's KMGH-TV was so overwhelmed with calls that the operator could record only 524 of them—*all* complaining about the woman broadcaster.—from United Press International

Wish You Were Here . . .

Tourists in Northern Ireland are gobbling up a new line of 12 black-and-white postcards titled "The Streets of Belfast." They depict violence in the Protestant-Catholic strife in Belfast. The best-selling card is one showing a small boy throwing a stone at a British tank.—from Zodiac News Service

ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN WELKIS

And now, the winnahs. . . .

FULMINATIONS

By Larry L. King

For weeks I have been mulling over my Best-and-Worst of 1974 list, a poetic license claimed by columnists since the clay tablet was a new literary innovation. These were tough choices, my fellow citizens, achieved only after much thought and prayer. In these infant days of 1975, let us now praise famous men—where possible—for last year's contribution to the merry American Scene.

Worst President: Richard M. Nixon, an apparent shoo-in last summer, survived a determined three-month spurt by Gerald R. Ford to win a photo finish despite a bum leg. Railbirds feel that had the race extended a month longer, Mr. Ford might have attained at least a tie. He gained by leaps and bounds with the issuing of the unpardonable pardon, by his stubborn insistence that the economy may be jawboned back to good health, and through his galumphing around the globe for largely ceremonial rituals while the sky was falling down.

Worst Cabinet Member: Though one is tempted to honor the departed and indicted former secretary of the treasury, John Connally, he deserves no better than second place. Earl Butz, secretary of agriculture and ethnic joker, sewed up victory shortly before Christmas with his recommendation that $300 million in federal revenues be added by raising the price of food stamps for the poor: let 'em eat coupons.

Worst Taste: We here honor the nation's automobile manufacturers, who after raising their average car $1,065 in price then demanded relaxation of federal safety and anti-pollution regulations in the name of Consumer Economy.

Best Taste: Senator Ted Kennedy, announcing he will not be a candidate in 1976 for President. From dry land.

Worst Threat: That of David and Julie and Tricia and Pat to take to the hustings to "restore" the former power and glory of Big Daddy Truthful.

Best Threat: Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's promise to quit if he didn't get more respect when the conversation turned to wiretappers.

Worst Explanation: Congressman Wilbah Mills, saying how much he and The Missus enjoyed playing Canasta and Chinese Checkers with that nice Battistella family next door, in explaining how he and Annabella ("The Argentine Firecracker") Battistella wound up drunk, scratched, photographed and wet in or around the Reflecting Pool at 3:00 a.m.

Best Explanation: Congressman Wilbah Mills, explaining the same circumstances to his Arkansas constituency: "Never drink champagne with a foreigner."

Worst Idea: That of one Spiro T. Agnew, a tax cheat and bribe-taker out of Baltimore, Md., to write a novel on the vice-presidency.

Best Idea: Shipping out Attorney General William Saxbe as ambassador to India. The Indians, a courteous people, will reaffirm their friendship by paying only polite attention to Ambassador Saxbe's periodic seizures of foot-in-mouth disease.

Worst Congressional Performance: A tie between House and Senate committees attending the confirmation rituals of Nelson Rockefeller. Despite many mysteries remaining in Rocky's lavish cash gifts to politicians in high stations, obvious conflict-of-interest situations, and the sneaky financing of that graceless campaign book against a Rockefeller gubernatorial challenger, the committees offered only patty-cake questions and obsequious fawnings.

Best Congressional Performance: House Judiciary Committee, for its stylish show in voting articles of Impeachment against President R.M. Terrible.

Worst Surprise: The defeat of Senator J. William Fulbright (D-Arkansas), our most articulate and thoughtful spokesman in foreign affairs.

Best Surprise: House Ways and Means Committee voting to end the oil depletion allowance and otherwise attacking tax-shelter boondoggles.

Worst Memory: H.R. Haldeman, who in the Watergate conspiracy trial exhibited total non-recall at will.

Best Memory: Senator Barry Goldwater, whose total recall of Nelson Rockfeller's failure to support the Goldwater candidacy for President in 1964 surfaced in the form of a vote against Rocky's confirmation as Veep.

Worst Lost Cause: Rabbi Korff's.

Best Lost Cause: Ramsey Clark's running for U.S. senator in New York, on a platform of telling the truth to his constituents and refusing to take bribes disguised as campaign contributions.

Worst Presidential Quip: Jerry Ford's oft-used "I'm a Ford—not a Lincoln." We know, we know.

Best Presidential Quip: Jerry Ford's "Ronald Reagan doesn't dye his hair—he's just prematurely orange."

Worst Headline: (12/19/74): CALL U.S. RECESSION WORST IN WORLD.

Best Headline: (8/9/72): HE QUIT!

Other categories are deserving of attention, but one had trouble finding "Bests" to match the "Worsts." For example, perhaps Iran furnishes the Worst Shah, but where to find the Best? For Worst Public Relations touch, one might nominate "The New Volunteer Army" (which, according to its expensive tax-financed advertising campaign "Wants to join *you*!" and presents itself as hipper than acid rock) for its busting and jailing of GIs for wearing long hair in the fashion of their contemporaries. I suppose the category of Worst Expectation might be filled by our naive hope that Jerry Ford somehow would quickly rise above his Grand Rapids visions and standards. But come on, now: did you really ever have a *Best* expectation in that crazy year 1974?

Happy New Year, Americans. ●

ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH CIARDIELLO

Only Rocky's chauffeur knows for sure

THE INSIDER

POWER POLITICS

Rocky says he's dumber than Ford

Now that Nelson Rockefeller has gotten a heartbeat away from being president, he is taking extreme pains to make sure no one blows it—namely, his last and best chance to become president should Ford decline to run in 1976. Above all, he wants to discourage the slightest suggestion in the press that he is more powerful or brighter than Ford. Moments before he flew down to Washington for the final votes and swearing-in ceremony, he called in his

Rocky: a Number Two man?

staff in New York, everybody down to his chauffeur, and told them they should refrain from giving anyone, press or personal friends, the impression that Ford needs Rocky because Ford is such a bumblehead. "I consider myself Number Two," Rocky told his troops, who have long become accustomed to only one Number One, "and not Number One."

Shirley and Rocky

One odd footnote to the theater of the Rockefeller hearings was the wholehearted support Rocky got from "unbossed and unbought" Shirley Chisholm the outspoken black congresswoman from New York.

Chisolm: Rocky's the man

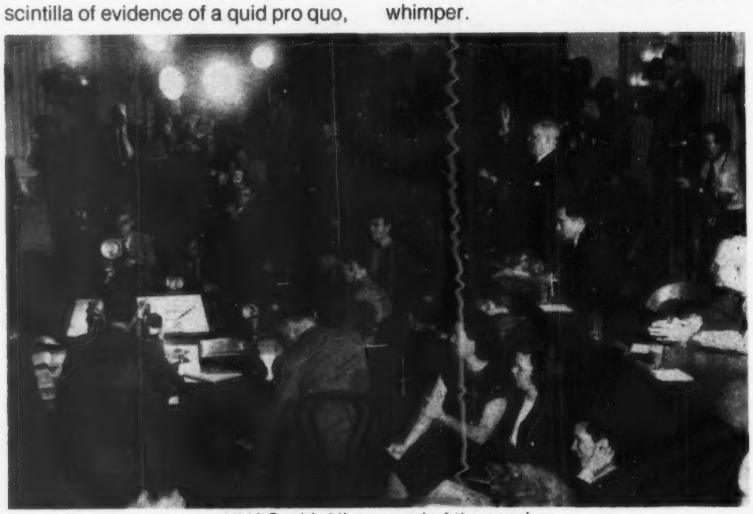
Among other members of the anti-Rockefeller forces, Bella Abzug was singularly incensed with Chisholm's position.

For some inexplicable reason, Chisholm has long been fond of Rockefeller. During Rockefeller's atrocious handling of the Attica rebellion, she remained conspicuously silent. And in 1972, Rockefeller appointed her to his short-lived Scott Commission, an organization he set up to investigate former New York Mayor Lindsay's city administration.

But her loud support for Rockefeller during the hearings seemed even more out of place; and although no one has been able to turn up a scintilla of evidence of a quid pro quo, one member of the New York congressional delegation remarked, "I wonder what the payoff was?"

Old red baiters never die, they just fade away

The once famous House Internal Security Committee, formerly known as the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC), faces possible—perhaps probable—extinction in the new Congress. Unnoticed so far is the fact that only one Democrat in the whole Congress has applied for a seat on the once headline-making committee: Chairman Richard Ichord (D-Missouri). For years liberals have tried unsuccessfully to kill the committee by voting it out of existence. Now they may kill it through benign neglect. The liberal-dominated Democratic steering committee, which makes committee assignments, is unlikely to appoint members to the committee who do not want to be on it. And the House rules require that every committee be manned by a ratio of two Democrats to one Republican. The answer to this dilemma may be to simply abolish the committee. If so, the committee on which Richard Nixon made his national reputation will end not with a bang but a whimper.



HUAC with Nixon: end of the road

Remember Vietnam?

Anti-Vietnam war peace marchers have not altogether disappeared. A candlelight walk in front of the White House is planned for January 27, the anniversary of the signing of the peace agreement in Vietnam. The organizers of the march are a coalition of liberal groups calling themselves the Assembly To Save The Peace Agreement. The organization expects about 2,000 marchers to show up from around the country for the candlelight walk and for a concentrated lobbying effort in Congress against any more money to aid the government of South Vietnam.

Fear of flying

Even before the recent TWA crash near Dulles Airport, the bad blood had already started to flow between airline pilots and ground controllers. The pilots feel that controllers are being too cavalier in their commands, sometimes giving them deliberately dangerous orders such as flying into bad weather.

TWA crash: following orders?

The feud has now become so heated that some pilots have made remarks over the aircraft frequencies like, "I want pilots to know I've just been given an order that may kill me." Other pilots murmer about "taking clubs and cleaning out the common IFR room [where the controllers work]."

Several months ago the controllers staged a dangerous slowdown when the airlines canceled their free flight privileges for reasons of economy. The controllers' freebees were supposed to be used by controllers to learn the pilots' problems, but the airlines claimed they had become just expensive junkets. In the face of a slowdown, which would have cost them millions, the airlines backed down. Apparently the controllers are still retaliating, particularly against American and TWA, which they feel led the move to cancel their free flights.

This feud has pilots angry, suspicious and questioning commands from the ground—which is not exactly the proper atmosphere for flying jets. *Flying* magazine, normally a timid publication editorially, last month called the situation "high noon on the runway." And the Federal Aviation Agency, never a strong force, is afraid to move against the controllers for fear of a crippling strike. However, if the hearings into the TWA crash conclude that the plane had been given improper commands by ground controllers, then the pilots might walk out themselves.

Well, what's in a name?

It seemed like a nice commemorative gesture two and a half years ago when the Duke University Law School class of 1937 decided to set up a scholarship in the name of one of its most distinguished classmates. "The idea was to do something, and Richard Nixon looked real good at the time," recalled Claiborne B. Gregory, a San Antonio, Tex., attorney, who was one of 18 of Nixon's 35 classmates to make a three-year pledge to the Richard M. Nixon Scholarship Fund.

The scholarship drive began shortly after a gleeful night trading accolades at a White House dinner in May 1972 in honor of the class' 35th reunion. At a time when Nixon was enjoying great public adulation, the fund-raisers had no problem reaching the initial goal of $25,000 in pledges. Within a few months, the pledges had topped out at $36,500.

And while Gregory and other contributors plan to ante up in this final pledge year, it is clear that the name of the fallen former president commands only the begrudging financial support of his classmates and little gratitude among the student recipients of his scholarship. "It's a pity it won't enjoy the name it should," Gregory said, "but these things happen."

The name Richard Nixon never was very endearing to William Healy, the first scholarship recipient two years ago, who describes his politics as "very much to the left of Nixon's." A 1974 law graduate, Healy said from San Francisco, where he is a clerk on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, that he

A gentleman and a scholar

wasn't particularly honored by the scholarship largesse, which he was unable to distinguish from other money he was receiving from the school. What's more, he would definitely support a move to change the scholarship's name. "I don't think it is fitting for Duke to have a scholarship in his name."

Did he find it hypocritical, as one contributor charged when he learned of Healy's anti-Nixon views, to accept Nixon money for his law school education? "I don't think it is hypocritical. You take whatever you can get—in the best Nixon tradition," he retorted.

Reconstructing Rocky's humble origins

Vice-President Nelson A. Rockefeller, as everyone knows, was not born in a log cabin. The former New York governor, however, has enlisted a team of archeologists, historians, architects and lawyers to prepare plans for a 425-acre memorial park in upstate New York featuring the reconstructed farmhouse in which family patriarch John D. Rockefeller Sr. was born in 1839.

The search for the family's humble origins began in 1929, when John D. Rockefeller Jr. bought several abandoned farms which included the original 54-acre homestead in the poverty-stricken rural township of Richford. He thoughtfully donated about 200 acres along the northern edge of the Rockefeller farm to New York State in 1941 for the creation of a state forest. His son Nelson began buying up a half dozen properties on the remaining three sides of the homestead through third parties in 1968.

One elderly couple held out,

refusing offers of $23,000 for their 75 acres of marginal farmland and threatening to thwart development of the memorial park; but the 83-year-old husband finally sold the farm less than a month after his wife's death last August, plugging the final gap in the buffer zone of abandoned farmland around the park site.

The same week that Rockefeller was nominated to be Vice-President, A. Edwin Kendrew, the historical architect who directed the Rockefeller family's restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, Va., was directing research of the

John D. the first: a common man

Richford homestead's fieldstone foundations and touring dozens of nondescript old farmhouses in the area to inspect construction techniques and materials of the 1830s. Reconstruction of the six-room farmhouse, barn and sawmill is expected to begin in the spring, and should provide evidence of a hand-hewn heritage just in time for the Republican primaries in 1976.

Second thoughts on The Year of the Woman

Repetition apparently being the better part of truth, we have all been informed that the fall elections proved conclusively this was "The Year of the Woman." At a recent conference on women in the media at New York University, political writer and columnist Ellen Cohn pointed out some statistics that do bear repeating: "Women are 52 percent of the population of the U.S. As a result of last month's elections, we see the following in the federal government: in the executive branch [cabinet, President and Vice-President]—0 percent women; in the judicial branch [Supreme Court]0 percent women; in the legislative branch: Senate—0 percent women; House—4 percent women." What's more, in 1962, "there were 18 women in the House *plus* 2 women in the Senate. Women will make up 8 percent of the nation's state legislatures, which means 26 percent more women than last year.

"The Year of the Woman," Ms. Cohn concluded, "comes from the same wonderful folk who brought you 'bra burners' a few years back."

The falling *Star*

The media talk in Washington, D.C., these days is about the financially troubled Washington *Star News*, which recently put its reportorial staff on a four-day week to cut expenses. New owner Joe Albritton is concentrating on stopping "the cash hemorrhaging" and word is he may soon convert the paper into a tabloid. He just hired Jim Bellows of the L.A. *Times* to be editor of the paper; Bellows was one of the designers of the highly successful Long Island *Newsday* magazine format when the L.A. *Times* took over that paper. If the *Star* doesn't make it, however, there are reportedly several publishers in the wings waiting to walk into the void. It is doubtful that any of them would buy the *Star*, along with its heavy debts and expensive contracts. Rather, the scenario probably would be to let the paper fold and buy up the equipment. Not surprisingly, Otis Chandler, publisher of the L.A. *Times*, is reported to be licking his lips.

MEDIA

The drawbacks to creative nonfiction

Joe Eszterhas has come a long way since his days as a reporter on the Cleveland *Plain-Dealer*. Since he left the paper two years ago, Eszterhas has become one of the top names in *Rolling Stone* magazine's stable of stars and the author of several critically acclaimed books. Now a bit of the *Plain-Dealer* past has come back to make him uncomfortable. The Supreme Court ruled December 18 that the plaintiffs in a libel and invasion of privacy suit against Eszterhas and the Cleveland paper had the right to recover damages. The case involves the widow and son of a man killed in the 1967 collapse of an Ohio River bridge. Eszterhas wrote a human interest article on the family of Melvin Cantrell in the wake of the disaster which depicted them as living in poverty and despair. The Cantrells sued and a series of courts found the reporter and paper to be guilty of printing a wide range of falsehoods with "reckless disregard for the truth." In his

Eszterhas: bad day in court

majority opinion, Justice Potter Stewart noted that, among other falsehoods, was the implication that Eszterhas had interviewed Mrs. Cantrell when, in fact, he had not. The Supreme Court, with only Justice William O. Douglas dissenting, upheld the original court decision in the case and the damages of $60,000.

THE WORD

No one's in the kitchen with Dinah?

Eastern Seaboard friends of movie writer-director Peter Bogdanovich (*The Last Picture Show, Paper Moon, Daisy Miller*) report that he is semi-pining in Hollywood. Our agents say that Bogdy's favorite leading lady and house pet, Cybill Shepherd, has discovered the he-man qualities of actor Burt (*The Longest Yard*) Reynolds, who first came to quasi-attention by posing nude for *Cosmopolitan*. Chemistry apparently occurred as Cybill and Burt filmed a musical comedy together. Presumably this leaves that nice, breathy lil' ole Dinah Shore without a great-and-good friend.

Bogdy and Cybill: now Burt and Cybill

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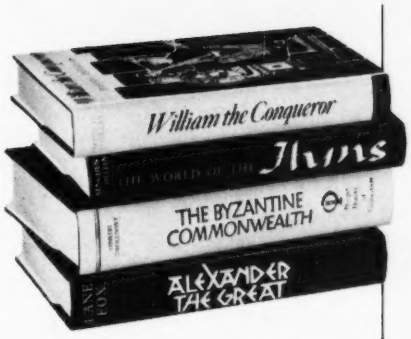

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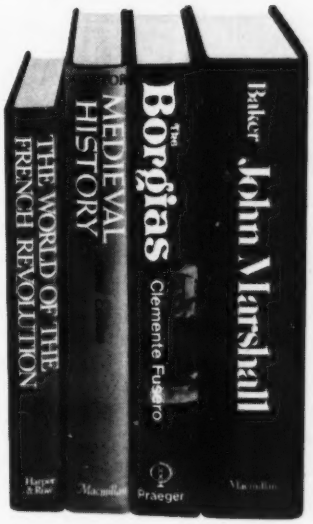

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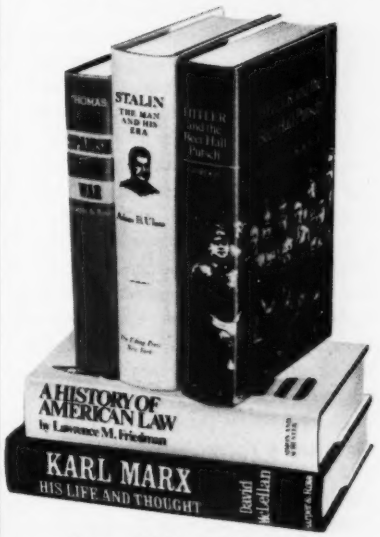

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Citizen Loeb

By Robert Sam Anson and Gordon L. Weil

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For the men who would be president in 1976, there are a number of hurdles to cross in the next 20 months, so many and with a field so crowded that some—like Jimmy Carter of Georgia, who announced his candidacy two weeks ago—and Morris Udall—who threw his hat in the ring two weeks before that—have started running already. Walter Mondale, who started running before anybody, has even had time to get out, saying the presidency just wasn't worth the aggravation.

As the months draw closer to the first hurdle—the New Hampshire primary—it won't be surprising if more candidates come to Mondale's conclusion. New Hampshire, thanks to William Loeb, the publisher of the largest newspaper in the state, can be a withering experience.

Why New Hampshire is that way is the question Robert Sam Anson and Gordon L. Weil set out to answer more than a year ago. They soon discovered that it all had to do with one man. In their investigation of William Loeb, they interviewed more than 200 of Loeb's friends and enemies, and pored through documents, records and court cases dating back the last 40 years. Here, then, is William Loeb, the man who made Muskie cry.

Few of the people of Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts, have ever seen the man who lives in the big house on the hill. His estate is not the sort of place where one wanders uninvited. A tall green fence—more a wall, actually—surrounds the grounds. There is one entrance purposely unmarked. Through it, only the carefully screened are admitted. It is a half-mile trip up the winding drive through lush, manicured grounds. Concealed in the foliage are electronic surveillance devices; at night, the lawn is floodlighted. Guests are advised to keep moving and roll their car windows all the way up. "Blitz," the Doberman who guards the front entrance (a German shepherd patrols the back), has a habit of leaping at anything that comes within 300 yards of his master's door. There are other precautions. The man of the house, for instance, carries a gun. So does his wife.

It might all be a bit bizarre if the man who lived in the big house on top of the hill were someone other than William Loeb. But to Bill Loeb, the wall, the surveillance devices, the guard dogs, the guns, even the hidden microphones in the living room to record his visitors' conversations are merely part of the pattern of normal living. Given his enemies, real and imagined, perhaps Mr. Loeb is merely being prudent. He is, after all, the publisher of the Manchester *Union Leader*.

William Loeb's *Union Leader* is far from the richest newspaper in America,

From the publisher of the Manchester, N.H., *Union Leader*, making somebody like Ed Muskie cry is the least we can expect in '76

the largest or most well-known. Its circulation (70,000) is less than a tenth that of the New York *Times*. Some suburban dailies are bigger. One of the few superlatives, in fact, it has ever been awarded came from Robert Kennedy. Bobby called it "the worst."

That didn't bother Bill Loeb in the slightest. The Washington *Post* never had a presidential candidate cry in front of its office. The *Union Leader* did. The *Times* often cannot put its man on the city council. In 1972 the *Union Leader* was commonly credited with electing a Georgia-born companion of Loeb's named Meldrim Thompson governor of New Hampshire; his previous experience in public office consisted of chairmanship of a school board in a town of 792 souls. Thompson's election was not deemed unusual—nor was the fact that Loeb also selected his Democratic opponent. This November, when the governor ran successfully for reelection, the only real issue in the campaign was the revelation that in 18 months in office, Thompson had placed more than 300 telephone calls to his old friend Bill Loeb.

New Hampshiremen have come to expect such things from the proprietor of the largest newspaper in the state. Even Loeb's enemies concede that an endorsement from the *Union Leader* means an automatic 15 to 20 percent of the vote. The mere threat of Loeb's opposition is enough to dissuade many prospective candidates from running. A publisher who has already called Dwight Eisenhower "that stinking hypocrite in the White House," and assorted lesser enemies murderers, traitors, thieves, drunks and liars, has a way of making even the stout-hearted think twice before they cross him. Explains a former state Republican chairman: "They don't want to subject their families to the *Union Leader*'s abuse."

As a result, Loeb pretty much gets what he wants in New Hampshire, from the motto on the state's license plates—"Live Free or Die"—to a pledge from candidates for statewide office to ban direct taxation. As a consequence, New Hampshire, one of the fastest-growing states in the country, is also the only state in the union with neither a sales nor an income tax. The result of *that* is that New Hampshire ranks 47th among the 50 states in aid to education and dead last in mental health.

But, in one important area, Loeb makes sure that New Hampshire remains first.

In 1949, at Loeb's urging, the state legislature voted to set the date of New Hampshire's presidential primary earlier than that of any other state in the nation. Since then, the New Hampshire primary has assumed an inordinate importance in the folklore of American politics. It matters little that Yankee, white New Hampshire is wholly unrepresentative of the rest of the country, or even that the winners of

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL GROSS

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New Hampshire's primary often as not fail to win the presidency–New Hampshire is first and Americans have a fascination for firsts. And so the candidates and the press pour in, and, for a few weeks, the publisher of an obscure newspaper becomes one of the most powerful men in the country. He uses that power with devastating effect.

Nelson Rockefeller–the "wife-swapper," as he was known in Loeb's front page editorials–never fully recovered from the savaging he received from the *Union Leader*. In 1968 George Romney ("the most stupid liar in America") didn't even make it through the primary. Four years later, Loeb trained the *Union Leader*'s guns on "Moscow Muskie," then the Democratic front-runner and leading Richard Nixon in the polls. Before the campaign was over, the *Union Leader* itself had become the prime political issue, and Edmund Muskie found himself standing on a flatbed truck in front of the newspaper's offices in the middle of a snowstorm, saying, in an emotion-packed voice, that Loeb (". . . a gutless coward . . . a liar . . . he doesn't walk, he crawls . . .") was lucky he wasn't on the stage at that moment, or the senator from Maine would take care of him. And then Ed Muskie did what other men have done over Bill Loeb's *Union Leader*. He cried. For all intents and purposes, the reelection of Richard Nixon was sealed at that moment.

It's hard to see what Muskie was mad about. He merely got the same treatment anyone gets whom Loeb doesn't like. Stories suggesting that his wife is a drunk. Fabricated accusations about his personal prejudices. Twice as much coverage for a political opponent few people ever heard of and none took seriously, namely Sam Yorty. A little name-calling. Some hints that he might be a Communist. In sum, nothing that you could call unusual by the *Union Leader*'s standards.

Other papers, of course, omit, distort and shade the truth, but none does it with quite the dogged persistence of the *Union Leader*. Stories are commissioned to fit the publisher's tastes; when one is turned in that doesn't match that taste, it is either returned to a reporter, with the admonishment to "jazz it up," or consigned to the wastebasket. Other news is omitted altogether. You will not find any items about Muhammad Ali in the sports pages, not since Bill Loeb decided he was a draft dodger and a coward. "You operate with two lexicons," says a former *Union Leader* reporter, "what you know to be the truth, and what you write for the paper. Nobody gives them to you or tells you how to do it, but, if you don't know how to do it, you don't write politics very long." Not even libel seems to bother the *Union Leader*. "There are some people who are libel proof," shrugs a reporter, who himself has been sued. "We know that when we write. You can write whatever you want about some people and there is nothing they can do about it. Really, nothing they will do about it." And when an unfortunate does have the temerity to sue, "the first thing you do is find out what you can on the guy, what is his background. Everybody has got something. That is standard operating procedure."

The man who sets the procedure is big Bill himself. He comes into the office but once a month, staying in contact the rest of the time by phone, letter and memos, some 150 of which issue forth from his Pride's Crossing mansion each day. But, as Tom Muller, the *Union Leader*'s assistant city editor, wrote in a revealing article in *Publisher's Weekly*, "He is never really absent. He is there and every editor on the staff is aware of his presence, as if he were standing with him. . . . Loeb dominates like a chief surgeon in an operating room. He not only decides who is to be cut up, but often specifies how, and into how many pieces."

Bill Loeb and his daughter Edie.

It is small wonder that as Edmund Muskie rode to his doom in Manchester, he muttered to himself about "waiting to get that son of a bitch for 25 years." Bill Loeb has that effect on people. "A near-Neanderthal," the Boston *Globe* calls him; a paper "published by paranoids for paranoids," is how columnist TRB puts it. Loeb is, truly, one of a kind. No other publisher arouses such venom. But, then, no other publisher works quite like William Loeb. "There is nothing at all admirable about the man," says Washington *Post* editor Ben Bradlee, who, as a cub reporter, had the distinction of being fired by Loeb. "But there is something quite remarkable."

Loeb even looks the part, rather like Daddy Warbucks, Little Orphan Annie's kindly fascist pal. The same bald, bullet-shaped head, the same hypnotic, deep-set eyes (Loeb's, however, have pupils), the same short powerful physique. But, in the flesh, Loeb is not at all the cartoon figure of liberal nightmares. He is, in fact, charming. His conversation is literate, properly accented and well-mannered. He does not rant as he talks politics, sipping a pre-dinner Dubonnet, the one alcoholic indulgence his fierce conversion to the Baptist faith allows him. Indeed, he never raises his voice above a curiously high-pitched monotone. The judgments he constantly passes are shrewdly analytical; the ranting hyperbole of his daily front page editorials is altogether absent. In a quietly assertive way, Loeb seems to have made up his mind about everything and seems only too glad to dispense his accumulated wisdom to his guests, from the strengths of potential presidential candidates (he finds Scoop Jackson dangerously stupid) to the correct length of skis (5 feet) to the right-sized rod (9 feet) for fishing for Atlantic salmon.

Indeed, the entire impression is so calculatedly civilized that one almost forgets that this is the same man who, according to a sworn affidavit, once offered J. Edgar Hoover a $100,000 bribe to fabricate evidence that would free Jimmy Hoffa, who, through the Teamsters Pension Fund, just happens to hold a two-million dollar mortgage on the *Union Leader* and all its assets.

If trying to bribe J. Edgar Hoover seems an improbable story, it is only because William Loeb, throughout his life, has been an improbable fellow. His father, William Loeb Sr., served as personal secretary to Theodore Roosevelt. Loeb Senior was also Jewish–"at least we always took him to be Jewish," says Ethel Roosevelt Derby, TR's daughter–a fact that has proved to be a considerable discomfiture to his son, and that is one of the keys to understanding him. For Loeb never got over his father's heritage; his prep school mates at Hotchkiss hardly let him forget it. Tauntingly, they called him "the Jew boy." Later, Loeb told his second wife that the experience at Hotchkiss had made him decide "right then and there that I was going to get back at them." (Others recall Loeb's school days differently. "People didn't like him," says one former class-

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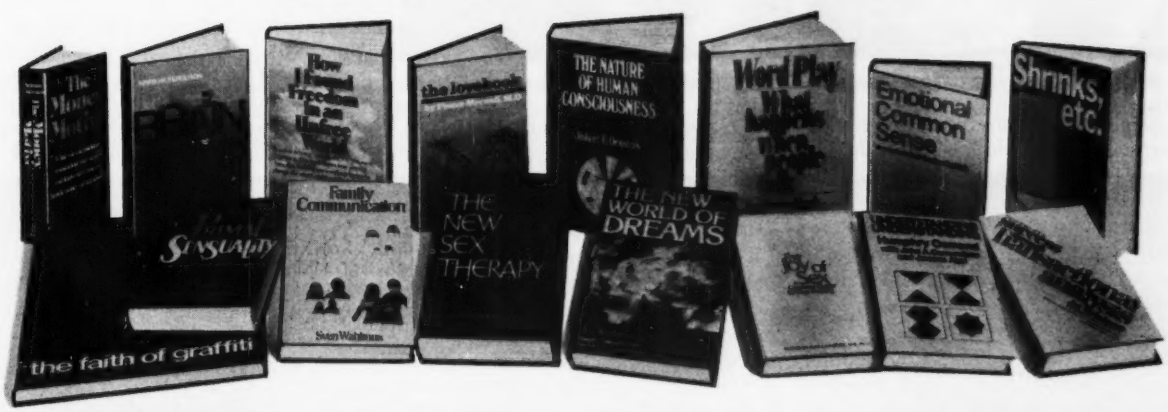

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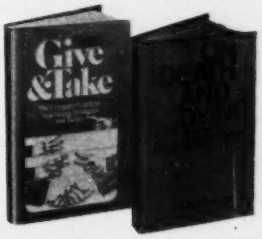

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mate. "Not because they thought he was a Jew. He was just a stinker.") If Loeb hated the WASPs, he didn't particularly care for Jews, either. On occasion, Loeb publishes a photostat of his Baptismal certificate on the front page of his newspapers (in addition to the *Union Leader*, he owns three others in New England), in a not so subtle reminder to his readers of the high Episcopal station from which he descends. The New Hampshire *Sunday News*, a Loeb-owned weekly in Manchester, once wondered in a front page editorial if the secretary of state ought more properly to be known as "Kissinger the Kike." In private conversation, Loeb invariably notes when a person he is talking about happens to be a Jew. "This brilliant Jew," Loeb will say, or "this Jewish lawyer," as if somehow Jews had to be set apart for special identification.

After calling Loeb "a gutless coward . . . a liar," Ed Muskie broke down and cried.

Loeb never doubted that he was special, Jewish or not. "Bill has always had an obsession with power," says a longtime friend. "He thought he was destined to be the man behind the throne." Destiny first took Loeb to the law, a career that abruptly ended when he failed to make it through Harvard Law School. It was while a student that Loeb married for the first time, an experience that must have embittered him, since he goes to considerable pains, even today, to conceal it. The marriage ended in divorce in 1932, after Loeb reportedly hired a private detective to spy on his wife while he was away at class. According to one of Loeb's friends, the detective took some pictures of the first Mrs. Loeb and a stranger in situations that suggested they were far more than casual friends.

From the study of law and an unhappy marriage, Loeb turned his hand to business, handling the family fortune, and dabbling, with some success, in the stock market. He also began to dabble in politics. Loeb became a paid lobbyist and public relations man for the Nationalist Chinese, and, with Mrs. Corliss Lamont, founded an organization called "The American Committee to Boycott Aggressor Nations." The committee seems to have been a harmless collection of mildly left-wing do-gooders who didn't much like Hitler, but today Loeb remembers the experience as a uniquely daring case of "penetrating the Communist Party without becoming a Communist or an agent for the FBI." "I discovered within a week or ten days that all the members of this executive committee—with the exception of Margaret Lamont and myself—were all dedicated members of the Communist Party," Loeb recalled 35 years later. "I played dumber than usual, and, as a result, I sat at their tables and listened to their future plans for the United States and the world and cheered them on and listened and listened and kept my eyes open." Loeb seemed, even then, to have a fascination for conspiracies, whatever their ilk. Friends remember that he joined up with a revolutionary Dominican group, which spent most of its time concocting abortive plots against the Trujillo regime from the relatively secure confines of Manhattan's Upper West Side. One friend remembers Loeb as swearing that, when the revolution came to pass, he would emerge as "dictator of Dominica."

A meeting of the plotters was scheduled at 8:00 one Sunday evening in April 1936, at the apartment of Sergio Binscome, the former Dominican secretary of war and a leading member of the revolutionary junta. Loeb was supposed to attend. However, Loeb had already spent the entire afternoon in New York on other business, and was wearily anxious to return home to Oyster Bay. At 7:30 he found himself at Columbus Circle, some blocks from the scheduled rendezvous. Briefly, he considered what to do, tarry an extra half hour before attending a meeting that would last long into the evening, or drive home to bed. It didn't take him long to make up his mind. He turned his car toward Long Island.

And just as well. For at 8:00 sharp, before the other members of the junta had arrived, there was a knock on Binscome's door. Binscome answered and was shot dead by a .45 wielded by a Trujillo agent. Apparently, the assassin had intended to murder all the plotters, Loeb included, and was frustrated in doing so only by their tardiness and Loeb's weariness. The near miss, however, was enough to cool Loeb's revolutionary ardor. After the discovery that Trujillo's men used real bullets, Loeb's friends never heard him brag about being "dictator of Dominica" again.

Instead, Loeb turned his attentions to the newspaper business, where the only thing likely to be spilled was ink. With money borrowed from his mother, he bought a small daily in St. Albans, Vermont. He also got married again, this time to a raw-boned, athletic looking woman named Eleanor McAllister, who at the time was working as a riding instructor in Virginia. Loeb told Eleanor to stay where she was, that, after he had broken the news of his latest marriage to his mother, he would send for her later. Three years passed, and Eleanor was still teaching riding in Virginia. Loeb, meanwhile, had taken up with a wealthy socialite, whose money provided much of the funding for the purchase of his second newspaper, the Burlington (Vermont) *Evening News*. In gratitude, Loeb arranged for his girlfriend's divorce by threatening her husband with exposure as a homosexual. "There is no way a man can defend himself against a charge like that," Loeb boasted to one of his editors. As usual, Loeb was right. His girlfriend got her divorce.

Stories were already growing up about the New York upstart publisher who was shaking staid Yankee journalism to its foundations. In a state where newspapers seldom printed more than death notices and the minutes of the last city council meeting, Loeb brought the muckraker's pen. He campaigned for industrial development, and for the rights of unions—until the ITU linotypists began to organize at his own newspaper. There, Loeb simply went in one day and fired the lot of them, replacing the union men with

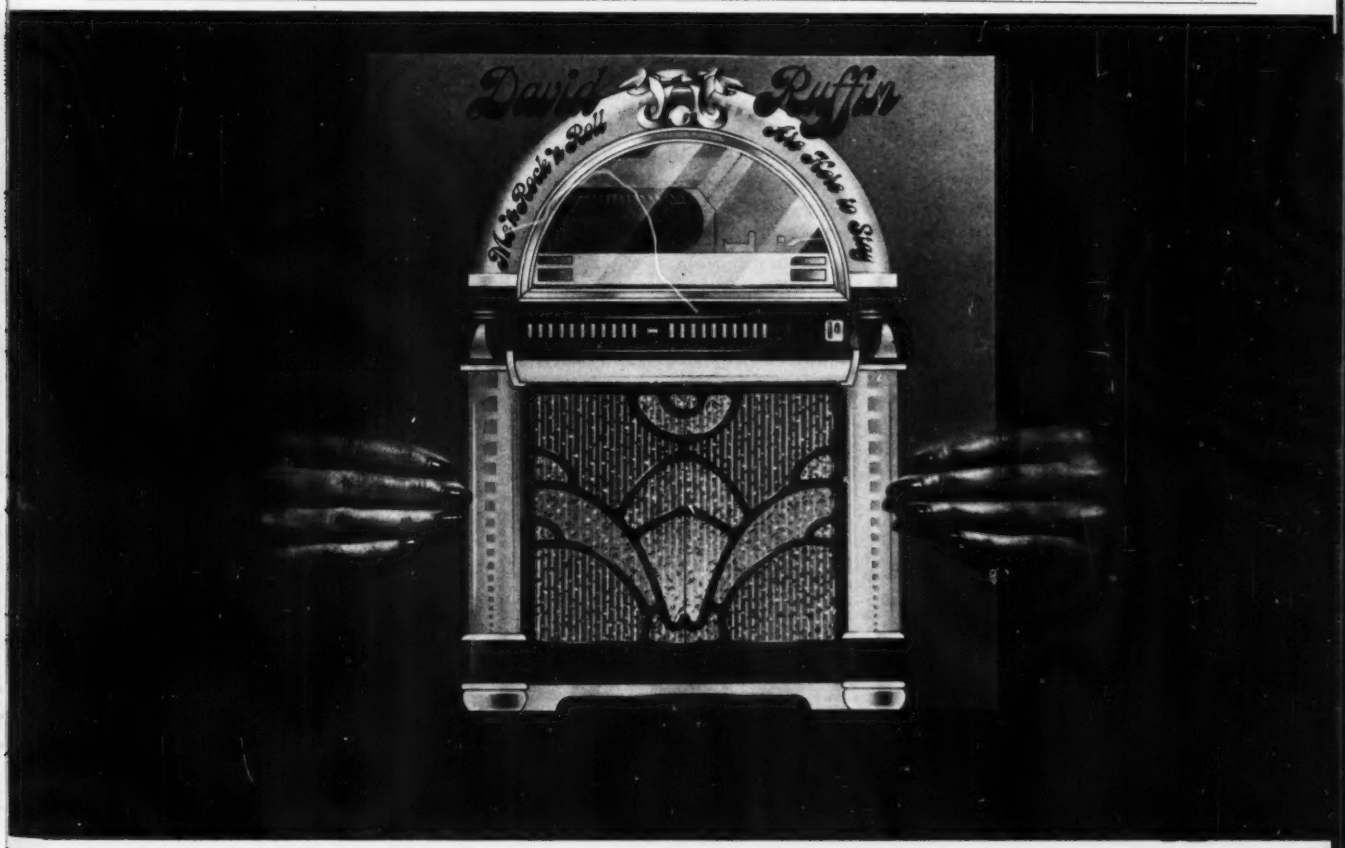
scabs he had been training for weeks. Moves like that added to Loeb's legend, as did the fate of the unfortunate cat who wandered into his office. Loeb pulled out a pistol and shot it dead. But what impressed—and revolted—people most about Loeb was the way he dealt with his enemies.

Like Bill Appleyard. William Appleyard was president of the Vermont Transit Company, a leading civic figure in Burlington and a friend of a rival publisher, all of which conspired to make him Loeb's enemy. Loeb struck back by writing a poem about Appleyard, which appeared on the front page of the *News*. In the poem, Loeb referred to Appleyard as a "punk" and, perhaps because the word rhymed, "drunk." Appleyard was not amused. He charged libel and demanded $50,000 in damages, which only served to goad Loeb on. In court, Loeb claimed that Appleyard had, on one occasion, chased another man's wife until the sheriff intervened. Another time, Loeb said, Appleyard had forced his way into the apartment of a Burlington woman and tried to rape her. Loeb quoted Appleyard's wife as saying her husband kept "a houseful of women," and that he often abused her in public. Shaken by the charges, Appleyard died of a heart attack before the suit was settled. To editors who cringed at such tactics, Loeb merely shrugged. "Editorials," he said, "are supposed to shake people up."

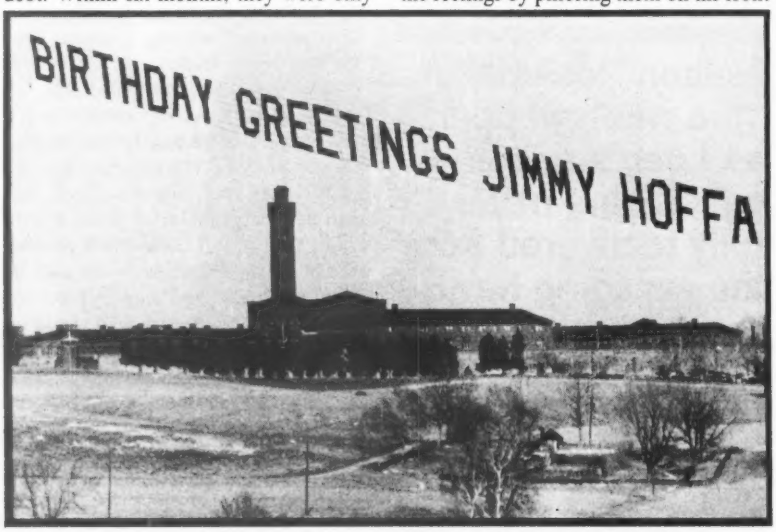
It was Loeb, however, who was shaken in 1949. He had, by now, jettisoned his girlfriend and taken up residence with Eleanor. But his eye had caught Nackey Scripps Gallowhur, an heiress to the Scripps-Howard fortune and wife of George Gallowhur, a wealthy chemical manufacturer. The progress of Loeb's and Nackey's affair was interruped one evening by a knock at the door. It was the sheriff, armed with a writ sworn out by Gallowhur, charging that Loeb had committed adultery with his wife. Loeb spent the rest of the night in the county jail. After a phone call to the governor, he emerged the next morning grinning broadly, with his arm around the sheriff, to whom he promised a free subscription to his newspaper. Loeb eventually secured a divorce for Nackey—though not without difficulty. He tried once again to threaten his rival with exposure as a homosexual, but Gallowhur was unimpressed. Then, one day while Gallowhur was in New York on business, a car pulled alongside and two men jumped out and beat him to the ground. Fearful now for his life, Gallowhur granted Nackey her divorce. Shortly thereafter, she and Loeb were married. Loeb's final revenge was a warning to Nackey and Gallowhur's daughter that if she had anything to do with her father he would "ruin" him, by producing documents and witnesses who would testify to something dark in Gallowhur's past. It was 20 years befor Gallowhur saw his daughter again.

Nelson Rockefeller, "the wife-swapper," as Loeb's editorials called him, never fully recovered from the savaging he received from the *Union Leader*

Loeb was more devious in gaining control of the *Union Leader*. In the late '40s, the paper was owned by Annie Knox, widow of Colonel Frank Knox, Teddy Roosevelt's old comrade in arms. Loeb's own Roosevelt connection put him in good stead, and Annie was disposed to sell, though with one stipulation. She and dear departed Frank had always hated



Germans, so Loeb was forbidden to take in German partners. Thus warned, Loeb immediately began secret negotiations with the Ridder brothers, who were, of course, Germans. In any event, the Ridders didn't last long. Loeb drove them out, mainly by plunging the paper deeply into debt. Within six months, they were only



Loeb had good reason to wish Hoffa well on his birthday in Lewisburg.

too glad to have Loeb buy out their share. Loeb's new partner was safety-match magnate Leonard Finder. Finder lasted until 1953, when he, too, was relieved to sell out. Finder took his share and started up another newspaper to the south of Manchester, in Dover, New Hampshire. The paper folded when, after only two months of operation, a mysterious fire gutted the printing plant at press time. Loeb's only problem now was dealing with his mother, who had taken a dim view of her son's amorous adventures and an even dimmer view of what he had been doing with the family fortune. Relations between them hit their low point in February 1953, when she filed a $1 million suit against him in New York Supreme Court charging that he had defrauded and embezzled her of a quarter of a million dollars—the money she had originally put up for the purchase of the *Union Leader*. Loeb attempted to mollify his mother by sending his daughter by Eleanor—a favorite of her grandmother's—little cards and notes. They would arrive every Christmas. The year Loeb's mother died, in 1966, the cards stopped coming. Mrs. Loeb, however, had the last laugh. Her estate came to nearly a million dollars. Son Bill was left not a cent.

It was not as if Loeb didn't need the money. In December 1957, Loeb, hoping to extend his editorial reach, started a newspaper in Haverhill, Massachusetts. He also entered into a complex deal with eight of the town's leading advertisers, paying them, in effect, to keep their ads out of his competitor. When word of the arrangement reached Loeb's competitors, they moved swiftly. Even then, Loeb was already roundly detested by his fellow publishers, and he regularly reciprocated the feelings by pilloring them on his front page as "anti-country, anti-God, sell-out press." Now, the publishers sensed their chance for revenge. Thirty of them formed a group called Newspapers of New England. They bought out Loeb's rival, and, when Loeb sued them for violation of antitrust laws, the syndication counterclaimed. Eventually, NNE was awarded damages of more than $1 million. Already overextended, Loeb was forced to close his Haverhill newspaper and begin a frantic search for new backing. That search eventually took him to the offices of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The Teamsters certainly had the money, billions of it in the Central States Southeast Southwest Pension Fund, an entity then, as now, subject to the controls of James Riddle Hoffa. The pension fund never loaned money to a newspaper before (nor has it since), but Hoffa made an exception in Loeb's case. Under the terms of the Teamsters deal, Loeb received $2,002,656. Loeb put the *Union Leader* up as collateral.

The loan remained secret for some months, until an enterprising reporter on a rival New Hampshire daily finally dug it out. There was good reason for Loeb to keep his dealings with Hoffa concealed. Until Jimmy took over the mortgage on his newspaper, Loeb was one of Hoffa's most vocal critics. Loeb greeted Hoffa's election as Teamster president in 1957 with the following editorial:

> The American public—not the newspapers—already has tried Hoffa in the court of public opinion and found him wanting in the very rudiments of decency and honesty. But, fortunately, perhaps all is not lost. For if present indications are correct, Hoffa may finish out his term as Teamster president in jail.

After the Teamster loan, Loeb quickly changed his tune. In May 1963, he wrote: "The fight of James Hoffa against the Kennedys is becoming the fight of all Americans who want to stay free men and women."

After Hoffa lost his fight and was sentenced to eight years in federal prison for jury tampering, Loeb came fully out into the open. In a front page *Union Leader* editorial, Loeb offered a $100,000 reward for anyone who could provide proof of the use of wiretaps or eavesdropping in obtaining Hoffa's conviction. A few weeks later, Loeb tried an even bolder ploy. He called Carta "Deke" DeLoach, assistant director of the FBI, and made what, even for Loeb, was a startling proposition. Later, in a sworn deposition, DeLoach recalled their conversation:

> Loeb said that he was calling from a telephone booth in New Hampshire and that, very frankly, the subject of his call might be completely out of line. Loeb suggested that Director Hoover might send to him, Loeb, a telegram stating that he has information reflecting that former Attorney General Kennedy had placed a listening device on Hoffa. Loeb said that the huge sum of $100,000 then should be given to one of Director Hoover's favorite charities if the director did not want the money personally.

Loeb denied DeLoach's charge, and nothing ever came of it. Hoffa went off to jail, but his friend did not forget him. On the Teamster boss' birthday, Loeb hired an airplane to pull a banner over Lewisburg Prison with the legend, "Birthday Greetings Jimmy Hoffa." Meanwhile, Loeb assigned Arthur Egan, his chief investigative reporter, to work on Hoffa's release virtually full time. Loeb also did some high-level lobbying of his own. Egan later recounted some of it in a phone conversation with Edgar Partin, the government's key witness in the Hoffa case. "The boss sent a flat-ass letter to John Mitchell and told him that Nixon, politically, is in trouble and needs support," Egan boasted. "And he said I own the biggest newspaper in the state and we have the first presidential primary . . . if you expect me to support Nixon, by God, he said, I expect something in return. And

I've never seen the boss lay it on the line like that to anybody. Boy, he also sent a letter to a fellow by the name of Peterson down in Justice. Jesus, he reamed his ass."

Loeb's threat was the kind of language John Mitchell and the Committee to Re-Elect the President could understand. On December 23, 1971, President Richard M. Nixon granted executive clemency to Jimmy Hoffa. At 4:00 p.m. on the same day, Hoffa walked through the gates of Lewisburg Penitentiary. Half an hour later, he made his first phone call as a free man. It was to William Loeb.

What followed in the next three months is now familiar history. As Edmund Muskie began campaigning in New Hampshire, letters appeared on the front page of the *Union Leader* alleging that the Maine senator had, during a visit to Florida, made disparaging remarks about New Hampshire's French Canadians; "Canucks" the senator is supposed to have called them. The writers of the letters were never found, but their authorship has variously been ascribed to White House Communications Director Ken Clawson, Charles Colson, Arthur Egan and, yes, William Loeb himself. At this point, it hardly matters. What is known, writes former Justice Department official Walter Sheridan, in his book *The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa*, is that "there was a quid pro quo in Nixon's first and vital step toward the Presidential nomination. In return for his support, Loeb extracted a commitment from the Nixon forces that if Nixon were elected President, the Nixon administration would do what it could to help James R. Hoffa." It was one deal where both sides delivered.

Today, Bill Loeb smiles as he tells the story. Not a big, relaxed grin, since he is not given to big grins or frivolous relaxing. If Loeb were a grinner, there wouldn't be the ominous bulge beneath the four-button suit, buttoned, as always, from bottom to top—the bulge from the ever present .38. No, as Loeb talks of the election of 1972, he emits a self-satisfied chortle: a low, guttural rumbling of delight from deep in his bowels.

People—those living outside New Hampshire, at least—have always thought Bill Loeb was funny, an anted iluvian clown whose preposterous opinions are always good for a joke or two. There are funny stories about Loeb in the national press every four years, detailing the outrages that are so outrageous they cannot possibly be believed. The ridicule that is heaped upon him is one of Loeb's best defenses. It is impossible to fear—much less understand—someone who can only be laughed at. "The whole thing was insane," says Tony Podesta, Muskie's New Hampshire campaign manager. "It made no sense. If you live anywhere but here, you can't comprehend it. How can a little publisher away off somewhere in New Hampshire make a presidential candidate cry? You could only answer the question if you knew Bill Loeb."

The few who do know Loeb—the people like Richard Nixon and Jimmy Hoffa—don't laugh. They always took him seriously. No other publisher maintains such a stranglehold on the life of an entire state. No other publisher is in that unique position to determine who shall lead and who shall not. If Loeb has a weakness, it is that his power is personal. He is 70 now, and without him the *Union Leader* will never be quite the same. Even with him, its influence will not continue undiminished indefinitely. New Hampshire is growing—and changing—explosively. A revitalized competitor or fulfillment of one of the Boston *Globe*'s periodic threats to invade the region could break, once and for all, the newspaper's monopoly hold on the state, its politics and its people. By death or dismemberment, the change is inevitable.

But there is still time for the *Union Leader*'s presses to run. In 1976 the people of New Hampshire and America will once again elect a president. William Loeb will be waiting. ●

David Ruffin
He's Rock 'n Roll
He's Back to Stay
He's back.
David Ruffin He 'n Rock 'n Roll Are Here to Stay.
M6-818S1 Copyright 1974 Motown Record Corporation.

Corporate cover-up

By Ann Crittenden

In 17th-century France, according to the great historian Lavisse, when the king's tax collectors rode through the countryside, the natives were ready for them. Animals were driven into the forest, silver plate pitched into the basement, and furniture stashed in the barn. Raiment was out and rags were in. Overnight, Ptomkin villages in reverse sprang up to reveal a nation impoverished, with nothing to spare for the voracious monarch of Versailles.

As everyone knows, the old French peasant's dodge has become the national sport of the American rich, with Rockefeller's "office expenses" and "charitable donations" providing the Super Bowl performance of the year. But far less appreciated is the fast and fancy footwork of the nation's leading corporations, for theirs is an incredibly more complicated game—devoid of stars or glamour but full of tricky ground rules.

The most illiterate denizen of the body politic is aware by now that the innumerable tax breaks, benefits and loopholes bestowed on corporations by a compassionate Congress enable many top firms to get away with miniscule U.S. tax payments. But how many people, including congressmen sitting on Capitol Hill's foremost economic committees, can be bothered with the stupifying details of corporate accounting, or with grasping a fact that is Kindergarten I in financial circles: that the very profits on which those tax rates are levied are to a large extent fictions—rough bookkeeping estimates revealing more or less the income that a company wants to reveal in a given year. When you or I make $20,000, we know what it means, the government knows what it means, and the IRS claims its share. But when a company reports a $200 million income, it increasingly means that the company wants the world to *think* it earned that amount—and any resemblance to actual cash flow may be purely coincidental.

It doesn't take a mathematical genius to figure out what the implications are. If corporations are using accounting devices to understate their receipts, and therefore their tax obligations, by billions of dollars, the impact on the Treasury could be far greater than most of the loopholes and tax subsidies put together. And someone else will have to pay the price—either the beneficiaries of sorely needed social programs or the tax-paying public at large, in higher taxes to make up the difference.

Major companies are so adept at juggling figures that virtually no one—including the tax man—can figure out how much profit they are making. Which is exactly the point. . . .

Profit figures are so manipulable that Alan Greenspan, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, admitted recently that ". . . profits are only a product of the accountants . . . you never really know what they are." What they seem to be right now is stratospheric, a state of affairs considered desirable until recently by companies eager to boost their image and their stock prices. But in the last few months, as industry after industry has reported record earnings, many executives have begun to worry that if things look *too* good, people may get strange ideas about who is profiting from inflation and who should perhaps submit to higher taxes or to controls. As a result, a number of leading companies are now scrambling to gear those earnings reports down, and to hide their record profits in a murky sea of ink that the most diligent revenue agent could not penetrate.

There is no doubt that the historic profits of recent days have been surprising—and embarrassing. Typically in a recession profits drop about 25 percent, and even in the mild dip of 1970, pre-tax profits fell by 13 percent. So far, the 1973-74 recession has been twice as severe as the 1969-70 slowdown, but profits have climbed off the charts. In 1973 the income of the Fortune 500 soared 39 percent. Median return in the oil industry was up 53.3 percent; in the paper industry, 49.4 percent; textiles, 45.4 percent and motor vehicles, 33.4 percent, to list just a few who are enjoying, as one accountant puts it, "fecundity beyond their wildest dreams of avarice."

Almost to a man, economists warned that 1974 would bring the crunch, and that business would be suffering by midyear, a prophecy that certainly came true for the auto industry and that had long been true for utilities and the bombed-out housing and brokerage businesses. But for industry as a whole, the good times continued to roll. Profits before taxes jumped at an annual rate of 45 percent in the first half of '74, and estimates are that they shot up another 14 percent in the third quarter. Basic materials industries in particular—oil, steel, mining, fertilizers, chemicals, paper—sailed through the year awash in historic sales and profits, with the oil and sugar industries—surprise, surprise—leading the breathtaking pace. Some of the smaller oil firms have increased their income by as much as 292.4 percent over 1973, and even mammoths like Texaco almost doubled their profits in the first half of 1974. This at a time when the GNP has been actually

ILLUSTRATION BY ED SOYKA

ILLUSTRATION BY ED SOYKA

falling for a year, when unemployment is climbing over 6 percent, and the real take-home pay of the average worker is down by $5 a week in the last year alone. Indeed, the only thing going up, besides prices, has been profits.

It is all very awkward, and the response of many companies, aside from stepping up their image advertising, has been to switch to what maverick accountant Abe Briloff calls "Twiggy" accounting: to reduce published earnings to as lean and low a profile as possible. The traditional incentive for stressing high profits—to push up a company's stock—is no longer valid in a market as flaccid as last summer's beach ball, so companies have little to lose and much to gain by their new conservatism. Just how much was indicated by economist Walter Heller earlier this year when, after estimating that oil price increases would raise the industry's gross income by $20 billion, he noted that "petroleum accounting will very likely be inventive enough to keep a considerable part of this windfall from showing on the bottom line."

The accounting techniques for squirreling away the big nuts are almost limitless. In a good year, companies often take precipitous write-offs on such costs as oil drilling, plant remodeling or relocation, or payment of interest on borrowed money, instead of spreading the expense over a period of years. Another favorite device is to set aside reserves against expropriation, possible bad debts, losses on future contracts or other contingencies. These sums are simply subtracted from taxable earnings in a bookkeeping maneuver that only occasionally appears on the balance sheet. It is as if an individual could estimate his chances of being mugged, or of never being paid back that $500 he lent to Uncle Joe, and then deduct the amount from the income reported to the IRS.

The SEC's chief accountant, Sandy Burton, says he sees "no evidence that arbitrary reserves are being set up by the oil companies," although he admits that this conclusion is based on assertions of the companies themselves, and not an audit of their books. "I'm sure there's some of this going on," Burton adds, "but the magnitudes are hard to perceive." Maybe, but they aren't hard to guess if it is true, as reported, that Exxon salted away $400 million in a contingency reserve in 1974, and Texaco buried $42 million in the first quarter alone. And at least one executive vice-president of a $150-million-a-year firm freely admits that his outfit is booking greater reserves. "Even divisions and subsidiaries within our company are not reporting more than 60 percent of their earnings to the parent," he explains. "We want to show a nice 25-30 percent increase in profits for 1974, and if we booked it all we'd show 100 percent."

In their *embarras d'riches*, companies are also spending like an archduke on the eve of revolution, for the more they spend the less they have to report as taxable profits. This is the year of the "soft-dollar" expenditures—on advertising, sales promotion, consultants and new carpets. "The oil industry is a big mover," comments one Harvard Business School professor who knows. "They're spending on anything, to keep income from working its way down to the bottom line. It seems like all of my friends are consultants to the oil industry these days."

Accelerated depreciation—quickly deducting from pre-tax income the cost of buildings and equipment—is another favorite tax dodge that is on the increase.

"Divisions in our company are reporting 60 percent of earnings. We want a nice 30 percent rise in profits. If we booked it all, we'd show 100 percent"

Total corporate depreciation almost doubled from 1965 to 1973, while after-tax profits rose only 51 percent. Yet the cry is going around now that even fast write-offs aren't enough, that depreciation should be based on *replacement* costs in order to reflect inflationary changes in the value of corporate assets. What is left unsaid is that such a shift would not only confer another special privilege on corporations (no one has suggested that individuals should be able to base their home deductions on current cost) but would also have the destabilizing effect of reducing corporate taxes in times of inflation, just when tax increases are most needed.

The swelling of corporate profits by inflation has stimulated companies to take advantage of what, in effect, is the most significant tax-avoidance opportunity of all—a perfectly legal accounting device that dwarfs in its impact all of the more familar tax loopholes like the oil depletion allowance. Here is the way this works: most companies base their inventory costs on the actual purchase price of existing inventory, working through inventory as it was acquired. This method is called FIFO—first in, first out—and in a time of rising prices, it will show low costs and high profits. It will reflect the actual jump in profits that a company will enjoy until old, cheaper inventory has to be replaced with new, more expensive stock. As much as 14 percent of last year's record profits, and fully 25 percent of this year's bonanza, are this type of inflationary inventory profits.

But the trick is that companies are perfectly free to figure their inventory profits differently, on the basis of current costs, or the last price paid for an addition to inventory. This is called LIFO—last in, first out. The LIFO approach, which is allowed in almost no other country in the world, obviously shows higher costs, less income and—eureka!—lower taxes. Not surprisingly, at the moment U.S. companies are falling all over themselves to make the switch to LIFO. Some 250 major corporations, including du Pont, Eastman Kodak, Coca-Cola, Firestone and Standard Oil (Ohio), and at least one sugar company, have already converted, and indications are that many more will shift at the end of this fiscal year.

The savings to companies, and losses to the U.S. Treasury, will be immense. Du Pont figures that LIFO will reduce its 1974 pre-tax earnings by some $300 million, and its taxes by almost $150 million. Kodak could pocket some $20 million in tax savings. Overall, estimates economist Henry Wallich, U.S. corporations would have paid some *$8 billion* less in federal income taxes last year if they had all been using LIFO, and $12 billion less if they had combined LIFO with inflation-adjusted depreciation. Corporations defend non-payment of taxes on this savings with the rationale that the money is needed to replace inventories. Moreover, as the economy grows weaker, and customers begin to defer their payments, the extra cash provides a nest egg that, as one corporate accountant puts it, "is better left in our pockets for a while than in the government's pocket."

This plea would be more valid if companies were indeed vulnerable to declining prices and to a dangerous price/cost squeeze in some rough-and-ready, laissez-faire future. But in today's tightly controlled markets, many companies can steadily raise prices to cover increasing inventory expenses, even, as in the case of the auto industry, in the face of falling demand. For such industries, the

Ann Crittenden, formerly a Fortune *reporter and* Newsweek *economics writer, is now a free lance in Cambridge.*

We pay their fair share

Even on the income that they do report, major companies are as successful as the super rich in avoiding U.S. taxation. The statutory corporate income tax rate is 48 percent, but last year the actual rate paid was 35.6 percent, thanks to an armed guard of investment credits, depletion allowances, kickbacks for export sales and other special deductions standing between company coffers and the revenue agents.

Most impregnable are the vaults of the nation's 12 leading commercial banks, which last year paid an average of *3.6 percent* of their income to the U.S. government. This wrist-tapping tithe results from the fact that banks can take advantage both of tax exempt municipal bond interest and the foreign tax credit, which permits U.S. firms to subtract income tax paid overseas directly from their U.S tax bill, instead of treating it as a deductible business expense.

The foreign tax provision also comes in handy to the American oil companies, which years ago had their foreign royalties redefined as "taxes." Last year the top six companies paid a crushing 6.3 percent of their worldwide income in U.S. taxes. No one knows what percentage of their U.S. income is paid to the U.S. Treasury because exactly where they earn their money is one of the tightest-held secrets of all multinational firms.

Obviously, the multinationals pay lower U.S. taxes than American corporations in general, but according to Harvard economist Otto Eckstein, an increasing array of congressionally approved tax shelters is making it easier for all U.S. companies to dodge the IRS. His calculations show that back in 1961 corporations were paying an effective tax rate of 43.3 percent, versus the 35.6 percent in 1973. This year, largely because so many companies understated profits, the percentage of corporate income paid out in taxes probably fell to the lowest level in at least 20 years.

The result of all this is that you and I are being asked to bear a rapidly growing share of the burden. Work of the Washington-based Tax Reform Research Group, for example, shows that corporate taxes, as a percentage of federal receipts, fell from 33 percent to 14 percent between 1944 and 1974, although before-tax profits, as a percentage of gross corporate product, remained fairly constant. During the same period, individual income and payroll taxes rose from 48 percent to 73 percent of total federal tax receipts. In 1973, while industry struggled under such tax rates as 11.5 percent (oil companies excluding the top six), 17.3 percent (metals and mining), 22.1 percent (drug companies) and 28.4 percent (food processors), a family of four in the $20,000 bracket was paying 15 percent of its income in federal taxes. At the $30,000 level, the rate rose to 20 percent (for 1971, the last year for which figures are available).

Below is a list of the top 15 corporations in the country, as ranked by *Fortune* and their tax loads for 1973:

	Chrysler	Ford	G.E.	GM	IBM	ITT	U.S. Steel	Western Electric	Westing-house	Exxon	Gulf	Mobil	Std. Oil Calif.	Std. Oil Ind.	Texaco
U.S. Tax Rate on Worldwide Income	3.1	16.8	32.3	40.2	22.5	2.8	28.9	39.5	12.2	3.7	1.6	3.2	8.7	19.8	.9
Share to Foreign Govt.	16.0	15.9	7.1	6.2	24.0	32.5	11.7	–	10.4	53.8	61.4	55.2	37.4	11.2	31.5
Worldwide Rate on Worldwide Income*	19.1	32.7	39.4	46.4	46.5	35.3	40.6	39.5	22.6	57.5	63.0	58.4	46.1	31.0	32.4

*All figures are percentages of 1973 pre-tax financial income.
Source: Tax Analysts and Advocates, based on material filed with the SEC.

non-payment of taxes on inventory profits amounts to a permanent tax deferral.

Worse, many corporations in these oligopolistic industries are going further, and under the guise of higher costs are hiking prices up a few extra notches for the road—a solution to the strange mystery of why so many industries are recording gargantuan profit margins in the midst of the worst economic slowdown in three decades.

Few would argue that they shouldn't do well, or that high profits per se are not a good thing. Above all, they have been essential for investment in industries plagued until recently with shortages in productive facilities.

But the current efforts to minimize taxable income pose another special danger. By pushing the already fuzzy picture of who earns what even further out of focus, the trend could obscure the fact that a real redistribution of income is taking place in the U.S., away from wage earners and certain sectors of the economy like housing, toward the wealthy and the oil industry, for example. At least when Texaco reports earnings are up 97.5 percent, the warning flags can go up. (There is no doubt that the redistribution is happening: between 1969 and 1972 almost $10 billion was taken from the bottom three-fifths of American families and transferred to the richest one-fifth, largely because inflation hits the poor hardest. Since 1972 that trend has accelerated.)

It would be nice to know that alarmed public officials are fighting this latest corporate tax dodge, but the fact is that Congress is too confused about the overall health of the economy to give questions of profit reporting a thought. And officials at the SEC, who have responsibility for all aspects of corporate financial disclosure, are more worried about the distorting effects of inflation on financial statements than the understatement of profits.

There is virtually no pressure, for example, for such a basic reform as a requirement that all companies use FIFO, even though that change alone would save the Treasury billions of dollars in lost revenues. Even tax reformers themselves don't fully realize yet that instead of worrying about excess profits, or the tax subsidies that produce them, they also have to be concerned about how those profit figures are calculated. For in the now-you-see-it, now-you-don't world of corporate accounting, one rule change can transform today's windfall gains into tomorrow's respectable increase in income, leaving all of the rest of us wondering, as prices and taxes keep rising, what on earth is going on.●

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MCA RECORDS

One final, fond wallow

Bread may have been in short supply this year, but was there ever such a surfeit of circuses? It may be a bit early to wax nostalgic over 1974, but years like this come once in a lifetime, if that often.

A year ago it would have been impossible to guess the giddy heights—and the pathetic depths—we would visit during the course of this roller coaster year. Certainly there were signs for those who read them: Nixon had already issued the Disneyworld Declaration, "I am not a crook!" and by December 31, 1973, the Dow Jones average had already sunk to 850.86. But who could have guessed, who could have imagined?

So, aware that the most fantastic 12 months we are ever likely to see are behind us, let us relive those dizzy days one final time.

January

8—President Nixon says he took "traditional political considerations" into account regarding the increase in federal milk price supports.

9—Under dark grey San Clemente skies, Nixon celebrates his 61st birthday, telling aides to "go out and enjoy the sun."

15—White House officials blame a 1971 military spy ring on a young Navy yeoman who "was told to keep his eyes open and who went ape."

Vice-President Ford, in Atlantic City, lashes out at "a few extreme partisans bent on stretching out the ordeal of Watergate for their own purposes." Two hours later, a court-appointed panel declares that the 18 ½-minute gap on a White House tape was caused by between five and nine separate erasures.

16—Ford says, "Even if you take the worst side, it doesn't justify impeachment."

20—Hugh Scott says he has seen evidence that would exculpate Nixon.

22—Ford echoes Scott on the exculpatory information, but says he is not sure if he should examine it.

Nixon tells 18 Republican House members that he will "fight like hell" against impeachment.

23—Scott defends his defense of Nixon, saying, "I saw what I saw and I am what I am and I stand on what I said."

24—Egil Krogh gets six months.

25—Ford says he is taking Scott's and Nixon's word for what is in the exculpatory material. "Those are two pretty good people to trust."

30—In his State of the Union message, Nixon pledges to "make an historic beginning on the task of defining and protecting the right of personal privacy for every American." In a slip of the tongue he says, "I urge the Congress to join me in mounting a major new effort to replace the discredited President."

February

1—Unemployment rises to 5.2 percent.

2—Nixon falls to 26 percent in the Gallup Poll, exactly one year after his all-time high of 68 percent.

3—Ford explains why he has not examined the available evidence: "I think it would be a very bad position for me, being number two, to misinterpret some information that might make it difficult for the President and more beneficial to me."

5—Patricia Hearst is kidnapped in Berkeley.

6—The House votes 410-4 to give the House Judiciary Committee subpoena power. Earl Landgrebe (R-Ind.) votes with the minority.

7—KPFA-Berkeley receives the first communication from the Symbionese Liberation Army concerning their abduction of Patty Hearst.

13—The USSR deports Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn to West Germany.

Nixon's doctor declares him in "excellent condition" following his annual physical examination.

17—A stolen helicopter, piloted by an Army flight school dropout, is shot down over the White House.

18—Richard F. VanderVeen is elected to Congress from Michigan. He becomes the first Democrat in 64 years to occupy the seat vacated by Gerald Ford.

21—Atlanta *Constitution* editor J. Reginald Murphy is kidnapped by the "American Revolutionary Army."

22—Would-be hijacker Samuel Byck, who planned to crash a jet into the White House, is killed at Baltimore Airport.

23—Former Senator William Knowland kills himself.

25—Herbert Kalmbach pleads guilty to two campaign charges.

President Nixon says at a press conference that "I do not expect to be impeached."

March

1—Mitchell, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Colson, Mardian, Strachan and Parkinson are indicted in a conspiracy to obstruct justice.

5—Ford says, "In my view the President can be impeached only for crimes described in the Constitution."

6—In a congressional debate on abortion, Rep. John M. Zwach (R-Minn.) declares, "There is a sickness of Americans. They have to have intercourse. Virtue is self-discipline."

7—Ehrlichman, Colson, Liddy and three others are indicted in the Ellsberg break-in.

Nixon plays the piano at a White House dinner.

Commenting on the S.L.A.'s ransom demand of free food for the poor, Governor Reagan says, "It's just too

bad we can't have an epidemic of botulism."

8–Ford says, "I know of no more bombshells. I don't think there will be any."

9–2nd Lieutenant Hiroo Onada of the Imperial Japanese Army emerges from his Philippine jungle hideout and surrenders.

16–At Nashville's Grand Old Opry, Nixon plays the piano and dangles a yoyo on stage.

19–Senator James Buckley becomes the first conservative senator to call on the President to resign.

30–Henry Kissinger weds Nancy Maginnes.

31–Nixon's "valuable" vice-presidential papers are shown to consist mainly of newspaper clippings, unclipped newspapers and letters from children. Two hundred and twenty-nine boxes contain invitations to social events.

April

2–H. R. Haldeman says that Nixon will emerge from the scandals "stronger than he was before, and stronger than he would have been had this not happened."

3–Nixon agrees to pay $467,000 in back taxes.

Patty Hearst says she has joined her terrorist abductors.

California's Lt. Governor Ed Reinecke is indicted for lying to the Senate Judiciary Committee about ITT.

4–Tornadoes ravage the Midwest. Xenia, Ohio, is the hardest hit.

5–Dwight Chapin is convicted of perjury.

6–Nixon flies to Paris for Pompidou's funeral. He reacts to friendly French crowds by declaring, "This is a great day for France!"

8–Hank Aaron hits home run number 715.

9–Nixon flies to Xenia, Ohio, where he discusses Aaron's home run with people who have lost their homes.

10–Golda Meir resigns.

Nixon campaigns in Bad Axe, Michigan, for Republican congressional candidate James Sparling.

16–Sparling loses in Michigan.

18–Jaworski subpoenas tapes and records of 64 White House conversations.

25–Portugal's army overthrows the government and proclaims a democracy.

29–Nixon, giddy over the Mitchell-Stans acquittal, goes on television to announce that he will give edited transcripts to the House Judiciary Committee. "The President has nothing to hide in this matter," he says.

30–The transcripts are released to the public and seem to provide prima facie evidence of a conspiracy to obstruct justice. Ford declares that the transcripts show that "the President, in my opinion, is completely innocent. . . . He should be exonerated."

May

2–Agnew is disbarred in Maryland. The court opinion calls him "morally obtuse."

3–Ford admits he is "a little disappointed" by the transcripts.

4–Nixon visits Expo '74 in Spokane, where he introduces Washington Governor Dan Evans as "Governor Evidence."

6–West German Chancellor Willy Brandt resigns in the wake of a spy scandal.

7–Hugh Scott calls the transcripts "deplorable, disgusting, shabby, immoral performances."

8–The Rev. John McLaughlin defends Nixon's language in the transcripts as having "no meaning, no moral meaning . . . a form of emotional drainage . . . a good, valid, sound form of therapy." He adds, "The President acquitted himself throughout these discussions with honor."

The Chicago *Tribune* calls for Nixon's resignation.

9–White House Communications Director Ken Clawson says, "The President will not quit even if hell freezes over."

Ford, in Illinois, says, "A grave situation exists in government."

10–Nixon tells Ford he's been "working too hard" and should curtail his speaking engagements.

14–Nixon nominates Gen. George S. Brown to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

15–Chapin is sentenced to 10-30 months.

16–Kleindienst pleads guilty to a misdemeanor.

17–The Los Angeles police kill six S.L.A. members in a shootout.

20–Sirica orders Nixon to turn over the tapes to Jaworski.

21–Magruder gets 10 months.

25–In a radio address on the economy, Nixon announces, "The worst is behind us."

29–The Dow Jones Industrial Average falls below 800.

Ford announces his support for Nixon's withholding of evidence.

June

3–Colson pleads guilty to attempting to obstruct justice in the Ellsberg case.

6–St. Clair confirms reports that Nixon was named an unindicted co-conspirator by the Watergate Grand Jury. He says the President considers the action "inappropriate."

7–Rabbi Korff's Committee for Fairness to the Presidency holds a rally. "I haven't been in a crowd this big since President Harding's inaugural," says one participant.

11–In Salzburg, Austria, Kissinger threatens to quit unless he is cleared in a telephone tapping controversy.

13–J. Fred Buzhardt has a heart attack.

14–Nelson Gross, former Nixon administration official and New Jersey Republican chairman, is sentenced to two years and fined $10,000 for tax fraud and perjury.

16–Nixon visits Israel. Golda Meir says, "As President Nixon said, presidents can do almost anything and President Nixon has done many things nobody would have thought of doing."

17–Kalmbach gets 6-18 months.

24–The White House discloses that Nixon had an attack of phlebitis during his Mideast trip.

25–Colson is disbarred in Washington, D.C.

27–Dean Burch calls the House Judiciary Committee a "partisan lynch mob."

30–Martin Luther King Jr.'s mother is shot to death as she plays the organ in church.

July

8–The Supreme Court hears the case of *U.S. vs. Nixon.*

9–Earl Warren dies at 83.

The House Judiciary Committee releases its version of the transcripts, showing that the Nixon version omitted damaging portions.

10–Florida Senator Edward Gurney is indicted by a federal grand jury for influence-peddling and extortion.

11–The House Judiciary Committee issues 4,133 pages of evidence. Ziegler says, "To release all the material dribble by dribble . . . in my view manipulates public opinion. One reason why I can spot a public relations campaign is I know one when I see one."

12–Ford says, "The new evidence as well as the old evidence clearly exonerates the President."

Nixon in Israel: "The arts you know—they're Jews, they're left-wing—in other words, stay away."

Couple of the year

Ol' Blue Mouth was back. In Australia he called newswomen "the hookers, the broads of the press. I might offer them a buck and a half."

It turned out that gas rationing coupons, printed at a cost of $12.5 million, activate dollar bill changers.

"I always wondered about the taping equipment," he had said one year earlier, "but I'm damn glad we have it."

The Nixon farewell left us all winners: "Those who hate you don't win," he pointed out, "unless you hate them."

Scores of publications, including this one, capitalized on this moronic and idiotic fad.

Sam Ervin, releasing his committee's Watergate report, explains why it drew no conclusions regarding President Nixon's actions: "There are two ways to indicate a horse. One is to draw a picture that is a great likeness. And the other is to draw a picture that is a great likeness and write under it, 'This is a horse.' We just drew the picture."

Ehrlichman, Liddy and three others are found guilty in the Ellsberg case.

15—Cypriot troops led by Greek officers overthrow the government of Cyprus.

Florida newswoman Christine Chubbuck kills herself on TV.

16—In an interview released by Rabbi Korff, Nixon says, "If . . . these charges were true, nobody would have to ask me to resign. I wouldn't serve for one minute if they were true."

19—Turkey lands armed forces in Cyprus.

Democratic and Republican counsels to the House Judiciary Committee John Doar and Albert Jenner recommend impeachment.

21—Jenner is ousted as minority counsel of the House Judiciary Committee.

23—Committee member Lawrence Hogan is the first Republican conservative to announce he will vote for impeachment.

24—The Supreme Court rules 8-0 against Nixon.

25—The Supreme Court rules 5-4 against busing.

27—The House Judiciary Committee votes 27-11 for the first article of impeachment, charging the President with osbtruction of justice. Ziegler says, "The President remains confident that the full House . . . will not vote to impeach."

Reinecke is found guilty of lying to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

29—The committee votes the second article of impeachment, charging Nixon with abuse of power, by a 28-10 margin.

John Connally is indicted in the milk price case.

30—The committee approves the third article, concerning defiance of its subpoenas, by 21-17.

Nixon surrenders 11 tapes to Judge Sirica.

31—Ehrlichman is sentenced to 20 months to 5 years.

August

2— John Dean gets 1-4 years.

3— Ford repeats his belief that Nixon is

not guilty of an impeachable offense.

4– Nixon spends the day at Camp David conferring with St. Clair and two speech writers, amid reports that the tapes contain very damaging material.

5– Nixon releases transcripts that show he ordered a halt to investigations six days after the Watergate break-in. He says, "Portions of the tapes of these June 23 conversations are at variance with certain of my previous statements . . . I recognize that this . . . may further damage my case."

6– Nixon tells his Cabinet that he will not resign.

All 10 Judiciary Committee nay votes switch to aye as Nixon's congressional support evaporates. Earl F. Landgrebe (R-Ind.) says, "I'm going to stick with my President even if he and I have to be taken out of this building and shot."

7– Goldwater, Scott and Rhodes meet with Nixon.

Landgrebe says, "Don't confuse me with the facts. I've got a closed mind."

8– On the sixth anniversary of his speech accepting the Republican nomination, Nixon announces his resignation, citing erosion of his "political base in the Congress."

9– In an East Room farewell to his staff, Nixon says that his mother "was a saint," and that the country needs "good farmers, good businessmen, good plumbers. . . ." He flies to San Clemente as Ford is sworn in.

14– Citing an opinion by St. Clair and Buzhardt, the White House announces that the tapes are Nixon's property and will soon be returned to him.

15– In South Korea, Mrs. Park Chung Hee is killed onstage by an assassin's bullet meant for her husband, who finishes his speech before leaving the stage.

Nixon is subpoenaed by Ehrlichman for the Watergate trial.

20– The full House accepts the Judiciary Committee report on impeachment, 412-3. Landgrebe votes with the minority.

Rockefeller is nominated for vice-president by Ford.

21– Ford announces he "probably will run" in 1976.

23–The Dow Jones falls below 700.

26– Charles Lindbergh dies at 72.

Nixon calls Rep. Dan Kuykendall (R-Tenn.) to find out if "the people want to pick the carcass?" He is unable to speak the name "Jaworski."

28– Ford says he will hold off on any action regarding a Nixon pardon "until any legal process has been undertaken."

29– Ford asks Congress for an $850,000 appropriation to cover Nixon's transition to private life.

September

1–According to a Gallup Poll, 56 percent want Nixon to face criminal charges.

4– David Eisenhower says he thinks his father-in-law should run for the Senate.

8– Ford grants "a full, free and absolute pardon unto Richard Nixon," and agrees to store the Nixon tapes in a vault near San Clemente. Press Secretary ter Horst quits in protest.

Evel Knievel fails to leap the Snake River Canyon.

10– The White House announces that Ford is considering blanket pardons for all involved in the Watergate case. Congressional and public reaction is hostile.

11– The White House announces that blanket pardons are not being considered.

12– Haile Selassie is deposed in Ethiopia.

Rockefeller announces his worth is $33 million.

16–Alexander Haig is named commander of NATO.

Ford confirms that the U.S. was involved in Chile before the overthrow of Allende.

19– Rockefeller announces his worth is $182.5 million.

20– Chief Justice Warren Burger falls off his bicycle.

23– Edward Kennedy pulls out of the race for the Democratic nomination in 1976.

Nixon enters the hospital for phlebitis.

24– The House Appropriations Committee cuts the Nixon allocation to $398,000.

25–William Calley is released from Army custody.

28– Betty Ford has her right breast removed after a tumor is found to be malignant.

October

1– The Watergate trial opens in Washington.

2– The House votes to cut Nixon's fund to $200,000.

3– Nixon encounters a photographer in his hospital corridor. The photographer is so startled by Nixon's reaction ("You goddamn son-of-a-bitch!") that he fails to snap the picture.

The Dow Jones falls below 600.

4– Nixon leaves the hospital.

6– Unemployment jumps to 5.8 percent.

7–Wilbur Mills' car is stopped at 2:00 a.m. His female companion, Fanne Foxe (the Argentine Firecracker), leaps into the Washington Tidal Basin.

Rockefeller's $550,000 gift to William Ronan is disclosed.

8– The Franklin National Bank is declared insolvent, making it the largest bank to fail in American history.

Ford unveils the WIN button.

10– Rockefeller is linked to the publication of a derogatory book about Arthur Goldberg during their 1970 race for governor of New York.

12– Ford drops 21 points in the Gallup Poll.

15– Governor Francis Sargent mobilizes the National Guard in Boston to quell the unrest over busing.

17– Ford defends the Nixon pardon before a House Judiciary subcommittee.

Happy Rockefeller has her left breast removed.

The Oakland A's win their third World Series in a row.

18– Rockefeller discloses that he owes $903,718 in back taxes.

Former CRP lawyer Kenneth Parkinson's son is seriously injured while trying to set a turtle on fire with gasoline.

28–Arab leaders recognize P.L.O. leader Yassir Arafat as the "legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

29–Nixon has surgery for phlebitis and goes into shock hours later. His condition is critical.

Ali KO's Foreman in the eighth round in Zaire, Africa, to regain the heavyweight championship.

30– Ziegler says, "We almost lost President Nixon yesterday afternoon."

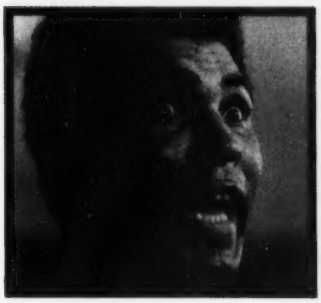
November

1– Ford pays Nixon an eight-minute visit in the hospital.

Unemployment hits 6 percent.

3– Ford returns to Washington after an extensive campaign trip for GOP candidates.

5– Sandman, Maraziti, Dennis, Mayne and Landgrebe are among the los-



They counted him out,
But he wouldn't stay down,
After the fight in Zaire,
Uncle Sam was the clown

General Amin's evidence (courtesy of Jean-Marc Camasouli, men's room attendant, Paris Orly Airport): "Call Lizzie Baggaza, Ka6-4159. Easy as pie."

The gag went that he entered the hospital to have a breast removed from his right hand.

President Ford proved that he could eat and sit down at the same time.

Nelson Rockefeller responds to Arthur Goldberg's damaging testimony at the hearings on his nomination to the vice-presidency.

First he sella da wheat
Then he playa da fool

ers in a Democratic sweep that gives them 291 House seats, 61 Senate seats and 36 governorships.

8– Edward C. Morgan pleads guilty to illegally backdating the deed for Nixon's vice-presidential papers.

13– P.L.O. leader Yassir Arafat speaks at the U.N.

Gen. George S. Brown apologizes after Ford rebukes him for an October 10 speech calling on Americans to "get tough-minded enough to set down the Jewish influence in this country."

25– Happy Rockefeller has her right breast removed.

29– Agriculture Secretary Earl L. Butz apologizes after Ford rebukes him for referring to Pope Paul's ideas on birth control by saying, "He no playa da game, he no maka da rules."

Doctors rule that Nixon is too ill to testify.

30– Mills appears on stage in a Boston burlesque house with Fanne Foxe (the Tidal Basin Bombshell, as she is now known professionally). He says afterward, "Nothing can ruin me."

December

2– House Democrats vote to cut Mills' power drastically.

3– Mills enters a hospital for "exhaustion."

4– A transcript released at the Watergate trial shows that Nixon told Haldeman on April 17, 1973, that he was "damn glad we have" the taping equipment.

6– Unemployment is up to 6.5 percent.

9– Hugh Scott says that tapes played at the trial show that Nixon lied to him when he denied involvement in the scandal.

10– Ehrlichman cries on the witness stand.

Mills resigns as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

11–Former Nixon counsel Harry Dent pleads guilty to taking part in an illegally organized political committee in 1970.

12–Fanne Foxe is arrested for indecent exposure in Casselberry, Fla.

14–Walter Lippmann dies at 85.

19–Rockefeller is confirmed, and becomes the third U.S. Vice-President in less than 15 months.

24–New Times goes to press, letting us off the hook for our failure to cover the 52nd week of this insane year.

The kids who talk don't know, the kids who know don't talk. Still, they *are* different, and there are ways of finding out how different

California children

By Carolyn See

California Children. California children. Leave out the north until later. It's enough to think of *Southern* California children, growing up in five-room houses in Downey, Lynwood, Torrance, Bell Gardens, Covina, West Covina, Claremont, Pomona, Canoga Park, Sylmar; children growing up in eight- or 12-room houses in Tarzana, Encino, Burbank, Glendale, North Hollywood, Hollywood, Pasadena, Arcadia, La Cañada, Sierra Madre. Children living out in the desert, in glittering stucco bungalows—whether tacky (tails of rust trailing from each jerry-built windowsill), or *terrific* (sauna baths and magic circles guaranteed to keep out rattlesnakes, and swimming pools like jewels in the sun). The five-room houses in town are apt to have swimming pools, too, each a separate turquoise bead in necklaces which stretch for mile upon mile, out over canyons, west to the sea, north past the San Fernando Valley, east to the San Gabriel Valley (where smog backs up so dangerously against the mountains that school kids aren't allowed out on school playgrounds for days on end) and south all the way to San Diego. In hundreds of new condominiums and ever more tract houses, the pattern of stucco, glass, dust and swimming pools (with sheets of translucent corrugated plastic to shade the swimmers from the sun or from the freeway) is repeated, and repeated. California children. From each of these homes a tot or two sitting in the backyard digging in the sandbox, a flock of fresh-faced fellas playing stickball in the street, a covey of preteen ladies walking carefully as quail in the early morning on their way to school.

More typically—it goes without saying—the girls will keep on walking sweetly, the boys will knock off the stickball in a minute or two and join the girls behind the nearest billboard to play a little grab-ass and share an early morning joint. The tot is up early, too, scrubbed to a chilling cleanliness by 7:30 in the morning and—still longing for his sandbox—is whizzed off on 8:00 a.m. freeways to be dropped off at nursery school. He kneels up on the back seat and looks out at cars, or over to the next lane where he's apt to spot another cosmetically decorated secretary-mother, and in the back seat, another baby face.

Oh, come now! Isn't this a little Dickensian? A little too melancholy for words? Surely some of these kids stay home . . . and some do. Here is an excerpt from the diary of a 14-year-old "mother's helper," working out a complicated penance for heavy drug use, or illegitimate motherhood, or in this case the simple crime of having sprung from the previous marriage of one of her parents. "Peggy generally gets up, makes breakfast for her stupid husband and leaves. The kid generally *cries* after her and bangs on the screen door until some days I think he's going to go right through. Some of my friends from school start zooming up and down the streets on their new motorcycles. Then the kid messes his pants. I stand it as long as I can and when the smell from old Junior there gets unbearable, I take him out in the back and hose him down . . . . I tell you the truth, I think sometimes what the fuck am I doing here? If it weren't for my stepfather I'd be home, and Peggy'd be home with her *own* kid instead of out taking pictures of fucking *rock* groups!"

Let me pause to explain how I researched this piece. I talked to a lot of children about what it's like to live here.

"The ice cream's great, ha ha!"

"I don't know, it isn't boring . . . ."

"I get to go to the races sometimes . . . ."

"Ah . . . ."

"Thirty-One Flavors is okay."

"*Trenta-y-uno*!"

The kids who know California aren't talking, the kids who're talking don't know. The best an adult can do is imitate the anthropologist, who, visiting his exotic village with nothing more than a smile, a shoeshine and a tape recorder, picks out a few informants and hopes for the best. I've used interviews for this piece, but mostly the written word—autobiographies by teenagers who were children a few years ago. (The autobiographies were done in writing classes; a kid who takes a class like that may be something like a native who spends time with an anthropologist.) I talked to my friends who are mothers, their kids are doing nicely, thank you. My own kids smiled, and looked out of the window, and told me not to forget surfing, or the ice cream at Thirty-One Flavors.

Well, okay, the subject is California Children. Pinball parlors in every shopping center, surfing, sex, drugs, violence, divorce. To think up an organization for this life is in itself to do violence to the subject matter. Because there isn't any. (It is possible to say, simply on the subject of their *parents*, that there is one divorce for every three marriages in the United States, one divorce for every two marriages in California, and one divorce for every *one* marriage in Los Angeles and its vast environs.) Perhaps it's best just to start

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at the beginning. The beginning is that almost everyone in California has quite recently come here from someplace else.

"When we arrived in L.A. we ended up in Bell Gardens." [This from the autobiography of "Patty," a California 17-year-old.] "How or why I'll never know, and my mother insists she doesn't either, although she picked it. That city was a strange mixture of Southerners and hillbillies. I hear today it's got the most ex-convicts living in it than any other city. We ended up in an apartment over some garages . . . ."

Perhaps it's just as well to follow for a while the fortunes of this kid, who at age 5 was packed up from her New York kindergarten along with her two brothers, and driven by her mother across the country, stopping in Howard Johnson's and Stuckey's along the way, eating those sticky pecans, getting sick in gas stations and ending up, dear God, in Bell Gardens. It echoes so many other trips—in covered wagons, or in the broken-down trucks of the '30s, or the later treks to find California war-work in the '40s, '50s and '60s. When Patty got to L.A., Kennedy had just been elected. People from the East, or South, or Midwest, feeling constricted by poverty or climate or social class, were still moving out to California—the closest, even now, that the U.S.A. has to offer in the way of earthly paradise.

The paradise they found was a piece of meretricious trash. That is to say, the sun was shining and that was about the size of it. The kids didn't need winter clothes and it was nice to go to the beach, but Bell Gardens is a long way from the beach. Spending long, lonely days in those rooms over the double garage while their mother was at work, the kids longed for somebody, *something*, to keep them company. They finally smuggled in an orange cat. "Once it jumped up on the window ledge while the landlord was outside and he saw it. Desperate to hide Tiger, me and Tommy said he was some new Mattel toy that was out at the time."

Patty's family moves soon, to Lynwood. "I did get a reason as to why we ended up there. You see, it was the next city you saw listed driving south on the Long Beach Freeway, so why not?" Patty starts the second grade. Her childhood is at this point "American" rather than "west coast"; she plays at the neighborhood park, she goes with her brothers every Saturday to a movie matinee and orgies of popcorn. The family lives in a large adobe apartment with a wide front porch, where every Sunday Patty and her brothers and the neighbor kids act out the latest gladiator movie they've seen. Very nice, except that Patty's playmates never wash, and pee out of the window as they are driven along the freeways, and stagger off to school with their skins absolutely mushy from ringworm, exema, impetigo. But what the hell, it's a different lifestyle, no relatives to disapprove or prissy neighbors to complain. The adults are off somewhere—driving their dune buggies or swapping their wives; the kids are making it on Swanson's frozen dinners, Jack-in-the-Box hamburgers and chicken from the Colonel. *Always Merry and Bright*!, as Henry Miller is so fond of saying. Always merry and bright.

After three whole years of stability, Patty's family moves again, over to Torrance. She is in the fourth grade now and in Catholic school—where nuns urgently try to, as it were, cramp the California lifestyle. One boy, whose dearest habit is to "pick his nose and eat it," has his nose and mouth taped simultaneously. Death before dishonor, the good Sister must have thought, but his mother finally comes down to school and complains. *Always Merry and Bright*! And there are, as compensations, long balmy California nights which the kids while away by "batting," tying a pillowslip to a curtain rod and running wildly down moonlit residential streets, trying to entice bats from the rows of shaggy palm trees which form a last wildlife preserve between asphalt streets and stucco houses. (Besides the bats, rats live up in those scruffy branches, and sometimes feathers float down, lazily, in clumps, another wren or sparrow torn to bits behind that palm frond veil.)

"Every night," Patty reminisces, "at least 10 of us kids would meet to get loaded or bombed or loved."

Patty is shy and lonely in the fourth grade, but that next summer—mark it closely, you sociologists—her life perks up again; she makes a friend. "She was a cool kid. We got into smoking, white Nancy Sinatra boots, the Beatles, the Monkeys and boys, all by the time fifth grade was through. Every day me and her would go rock out in the living room, stopping only in time to watch *Gidget*."

After the sixth grade Patty moves again, and if this sounds farfetched remember another California statistic—that the average California family moves once every two years. It isn't so tough this time, because by now Patty has found her culture, her *milieu*. (Her brothers, on the other hand, have what you might call a few psychic troubles. One has been effectively locked in his room for the last couple of years; the other has purchased an Alaskan husky and lives out a fantasy life entirely connected with the north—as several years later the 10-to-13 set will make a fetish of the wilderness in Robert Redford's *Jeremiah Johnson*.) Patty can say, of this latest move, "once again I said goodby to a friend in heartbreak," but she isn't lonesome for long. "Every night in seventh grade," Patty reminisces, "at least ten of us kids would meet in someone's house to get loaded, or bombed, or loved . . . . Usually the day started at three in the afternoon with ripple and ended at midnight with a few joints to mellow out the evening . . . ." Her new friends are "constantly on Quaaludes"; her closest chum "really gets into Chico's Pizza Parlor and ends up in someone's apartment every other night." Soon after that, one of her brothers drops out of school, which leads to him being kicked out of the house. Patty then enters the tenth grade, which takes her out of the "child" category. "Child" category indeed. Surely "Patty" is just one kid—and a poor one at that—only a literal stone's throw away from the ringworm dregs of California society.

"Would you believe," a girl named "Sharon" writes. (Such a girl! Clear flushed skin, natural blond hair that shines in the dark, habituée of horse shows, as rangy as a young colt and to all appearances as uncomplicated.) "Would you believe that two years ago we were a perfectly 'normal' family? My parents were happily married, we had a nice home, *et cetera*. But when my Mom found out about my Dad's activities 'on the side'—cheating, you know, going out with other women—it really killed her. She was a lump of human flesh. She would go through stages where all she would do was drink, then all she would do was cry, *et cetera*." Well, this particular family drama unfolds: Dad finally decides he wants a divorce, Mother tearfully files the papers—her restless soon-to-be-ex-mate meanwhile squandering their considerable family fortune on drink, travel, gambling and that ubiquitous *et cetera*. The mother, going into another "stage," finds herself a muscular, Johnny Stom-

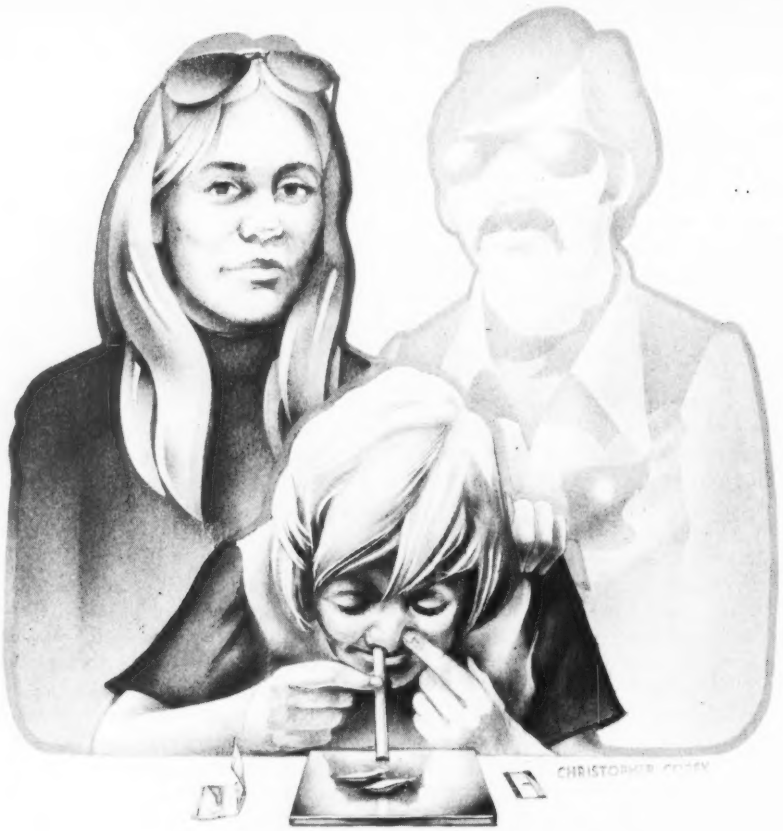
The writer, a teacher at a small liberal arts college in Southern California and a previous contributor to these pages, is a California child. Her book on porno kings and queens, Blue Money, *was published earlier this year.*

panato escort; the prodigal husband then changes *his* mind, pleads to come back, the wife says *not on your tintype*! The men circle each other like crazed bulls; the particular college girl writing this journal entry discovers that this will be her last year in private school because there is no more money in the bank. (She can't get a scholarship, however, because her father—who still won't go through with the divorce—is making $24,000 a year and is a putative member of the middle class.)

Sharon's problems didn't start until she was 15, and there are worse things in life than working your way through college at Pup 'n Taco, or getting phone calls in the night from your father's disconsolate chorus girls, each demanding reassurance that they're the "only one." Yes, there are worse lives to live, as this girl herself points out: "At least I'm out of the house and don't have to see my mother with what's-his-name, and I don't have to be a part of those continual hassles with my dad, but what about my baby brother and sister? I keep telling my mom she's no better than my dad, she's doing the same thing he's doing. She tells me I don't understand. Then you know what she says? She says she spent sixteen years of her life being a good wife and mother, doing things for other people, and now she's going to start doing things for herself. I can't even think about what those kids have to see every day and every night. It makes me so sad I can't think about it."

Life being what it is, Sharon returns to other subjects in her journal: her roommates go to a "Fifties" Dance and have a nice time, she spends one wonderful weekend skiing with friends, and—in fine California tradition—the next weekend at the beach where, against the perfect accompaniment of sky and sand and sun, she meets a "darling guy." They frolic for a while, this athletic pair, scampering up and down the strand, hurling a frisbee back and forth in light-hearted fashion. We may presume the boy is happy with his new-found, golden-haired treasure. The poor sap doesn't know he's playing with a time bomb.

No, this quality of "explosion," that psychic force which at any moment may send mommies and daddies and couches and cars and all skidding madly off the turntable of California Life, isn't limited to any class, to the prosperous, to the uneducated. It is ubiquitous. Money doesn't help, nor brains, nor talent, nor style. For instance, a brilliant young west coast photographer in his 20s recently accompanied a journalist on an interview of a celebrated author who lives out of town on the bold and windswept bluffs of the beach beyond Malibu. The photographer



had grown up on these same windswept bluffs. Seeing the author's forlorn looking child reminded him of his own lonely boyhood, and he talked about it to the journalist on the way back to the city. The journalist included their conversation in his article, and the author was hopping mad at the inference that she was a bad mother, her kid was unhappy, and so on and so on. (However, she's talked about her own oppressive childhood and often bleak marriage many times in print, and so has her husband, and so do we all, and so will our children—if they can stop screwing around and getting stoned long enough to get married and have kids, and then pick up their pens or plug in their typewriters.) And yes, it's true, there are some orderly homes in California where calm and faithful mothers drive their sons to Little League, but in California no one *guarantees* it. This isn't earthquake country for nothing.

Having written this far, I showed a friend of mine the previous pages. She—a mother—said, "Oh, I can't relate to this stuff at all. I mean, our kids are weird, but they don't do *that*." She's right, of course. Nature's imperative provides every parent with a close-fitting pair of rose-colored glasses. Let me skip, therefore, my own children and the children of my friends, and talk a little about the kids of my acquaintances—kids I can see well enough. Let me say that a particularly straight-up lawyer, a widower who has "devoted his life to his son," talks sometimes about the bad acid his son once took on the school ground. The lawyer spoke very seriously to his son about that, and told him he should never do that again. A year later the son graduated with honors—from elementary school.

The daughter of another acquaintance of mine was found one morning resting underneath a tree when she should have been in school. When a passerby asked her if anything was wrong, the girl said that her back appeared to be broken; she didn't seem to be able to move. Her distraught parents were summoned from their respective jobs; they met their still supine daughter at the emergency room of a local hospital, and were told, several hours and hundreds of dollars later, that there wasn't a thing wrong with her. She caught hell, you can imagine, and left home soon after. She's married now, to a gas station attendant, and expecting twins. She's 15. One of the nicest boys I know is about 14 now. He is a hard worker, respectful to adults, an enthusiastic Boy Scout and sniffs a lot of cocaine. (Either one of these last is, I suppose, swell; but both *together* is hard to think about.) It's hard to see kids in the fourth grade and think that in a year or so those sweet babies will be smoking their first dope—if

they haven't already—and in a year after that have their first sex—if they haven't already. (Another bewitching California statistic tells us that incest is the number one recorded crime in the San Fernando Valley—L.A.'s most middle-class bedroom suburb.)

In fact, under Southern California's metallic, inviting skies there has been (and continues to be) the wildest kind of social breakdown. It isn't enough that most of us have left our families and our past "back east" somewhere. It isn't enough that we work mostly in aerospace or the movies—two of the most abysmally insecure industries imaginable. It isn't enough that our marriages have broken up one or two or three times. We're only human beings after all, and generally speaking, we just can't take it. There has recently appeared here a newspaper called *Momma*, a journal for single mothers. The editor, Karel Hope, has written a manifesto of what it means to be a woman alone with children. It's not all bad, she says. You can feel "Touched," "Happy," "On Top of Things." But under the heading "Tired," she writes, simply, "Let's not even eat dinner!" And under "Angry," she remembers that her daughter has gone on a camping trip and taken the only toothbrush in the house with her.

This is the evidence. A swell bunch of evidence it is. I would like to submit that for every printed example there are a thousand unrecorded echoes; a thousand homes where the mother is too tired to fix dinner, where the kids don't mind because they're out somewhere (not in Nancy Sinatra boots but lurching about in miniature platforms) getting "loaded, bombed or loved" at some adjoining tract house, and not liking the loving part overly because there isn't a toothbrush (or a bar of soap) in a carload of kids. Yes, friends, the mothers are inadequate, unloved and out of it; the dads are out to lunch. "Patty's" dad, although he was the subject in another paper of hers, never appears in her autobiography. The brilliant photographer's dad rarely shows up—he's off in a foreign capital somewhere. Remember the famous Loud family? Remember they lived smack in the middle of California? Remember Lance, the screaming fag, and his clumsy sisters; remember their pitiful reliance on the dumbest parts of "popular culture"; remember that mother with her teenage hair; remember that dad, with his credit cards and boyish charm, holed up, finally, where he always wanted to be, in a bachelor pad—where between fiberglass drapes and deep shag rug the sound of a kid might never penetrate? Never.

Well, *Always Merry and Bright*! Can we help it if in California we really *can* act out our fantasies?

Having written this, I stop, again. I think. Well, I think, okay. What does it mean? Search me. It's easy to talk about the parents who obstinately grow down instead of up; it's easy to talk about Okies and Ohioans, and a lost past and a scarcely nonexistent present. It's also dreadfully easy, speaking on behalf of California *mothers*, to count the number of toothbrushes in our own houses and compute the number of gymnastic lessons, piano lessons, riding lessons, ballet lessons we've purchased for our children. Easy to remember the times they've been scared, and we've been there. It's terribly *hard* to remember the times we've been *out*, for hours or days, and fallen back heavily on tantrums and TV dinners. Our kids take care of *us*, so often, when our husbands leave, or they take care of our husbands when they've had too much acid or fallen in love with the usual secretary or gotten themselves laid off their jobs. How much more can I say? That Watts itself looked like a pretty suburb until the day they set fire to it.

It's true . . . there are some orderly homes in California . . . where calm and faithful mothers drive sons to Little League

For all this—to paraphrase the poet—California is never spent. There really *is* "the dearest freshness deep down things. . . ." Southern California is still the place where kids can buy a taco for 21 cents (and in the east they're just beginning their peptic destruction). California really *is* where you surf, in long, beautiful, blue-rolling swoops, and only one boy in a thousand or so gets his neck broken. California is the home of the skateboard, the Monterrey Pop Festival, the only edible hamburger. Its Will Wrights, Thirty-One Flavors and Swensons ice cream really do put Howard Johnson's into disgraceful shade. California is where kids run away to, when they run, and even in California they run away to California. Highway 1, that spectacular road along the coast from L.A. to the northern border, is a crowded underground railroad in the summer, cluttered with rucksacks, sleeping bags, empty bottles of Annie Greensprings, and couples or packs of kids and their signs which variously announce SAN FRANCISCO, L.A., SPARE CHANGE? and GOD LOVES YOU.

Finally, California is the home of the China Palace (and a thousand restaurants like it), a homey place with excellent food, where the management doesn't mind if kids carouse, or drop their jackets down behind the booths, or crawl out from under the far end of a table between a forest of grown-up legs. At the China Palace kids eat shrimp in garlic sauce with their mothers one night and chicken in peppers the next night with their fathers; eating with their mothers one night they may see their dads across the room with the other woman. Where kids see their mother's girlfriends with their father's boyfriends, and vice versa, and vice versa yet again. While well-behaved Chinese children sit up to great family tables of uncles and aunts and grandparents and cousins, the American kids form families of their own, striding in faded jeans (with rhinestones) across the crowded room to say hello to half-sisters, or stepbrothers, or the kids of their mother's ex-boyfriend. The boys fill up on Wonderful Taste Chicken and then get up and go outside to bike around the block. The girls go in flocks to the restroom, and giggle.

I would like to say that last summer, after a long and perfect day at the beach, a woman friend and I took all our children to the China Palace. Getting out of the car, one of the kids, Anthony (he's 12, takes flute lessons, is learning to surf, and has already been hauled into jail once for throwing rocks at a truck), turned suddenly pale under his freckles, reached down and scooped up $238—the two hundreds in spanking new hundred-dollar bills, the rest in crumpled change. We stood for a while in the lot and waited for someone to claim the money; Anthony kept smiling with terrific quiet happiness. There was no wallet, there were no claimants. Pretty soon we all went inside. His mother told Anthony that he could keep the $200 for himself but he had to use the rest to buy us all dinner. We ordered the tea-smoked duck, and Lion's Head, and many other delicacies. Our waiter is crazy about my woman friend and rolled up his sleeve—as always—to show her his watch, where the numerals are made up entirely of people entwined in the sexual act. We were sunburned and happy. It was a splendid night. But the point is, *none of us was too surprised*. The Chinese used to call America the Mountain of Gold (and meant it, I think, in every way). And California is to America what America once was to the huddled masses. The kids don't think about it much; they've got it, like strontium 90, in their bones. ●

The women of Walthourville

The place is Walthourville, a town so tiny folks in that part of Georgia would call it a wide place in the road. A couple of neat new stores with gas pumps stand hopefully athwart U.S. 82 in the swamp-sinewed sands between Savannah and Brunswick. These two stores are the visible heart of the community of 413, which got its start back in 1795 under the putative leadership of men, who then sat down in their rockers, leaned back, and swung their feet up onto the bannister rail to watch the tall pines grow and the whispy fingers of Spanish moss reach a little closer to the ground from the limbs of ancient liveoak. Maybe it wasn't quite that way, but for 179 years nothing much happened until early in 1974 when the women took over and Walthourville became a little more than a couple of friendly, intimate lights for the night driver along that lonesome stretch.

Mrs. Lyndol Anderson, who is 51 and a grandmother four times, got together with several other women and decided Walthourville should be a real city, with real services—streets and sewers and that sort of thing—just like nearby Hinesville or Savannah. They planned and talked it up and cajoled until they had just about everyone in town with them. They enlisted the services of Judge Donald H. Frazer (a former judge, now a state representative of Liberty County, he keeps the title), who helped the women organize and petition for incorporation in Liberty. He managed to push the petition through and Walthourville became a certified town governed by women: Mayor Lyndol Anderson, five councilwomen

Mayor Anderson pumping gas at her store.

and the treasurer/town clerk.

Mayor Anderson runs one of the two stores full time for her family. The first faint intimation of discord came from the other, across the road. The proprietor of that store, Thomas Edward (Ed) Rogers, 34, decided he'd run for mayor in the first election in December. With this decision came, too, the first faint intimations of male chauvinism. "I don't think," said this lean cracker with a Marine white sidewall haircut, "women should be in politics." More followed. He promised nothing but himself as mayor. Male opponents went on the ballot against all but one of the councilwomen, Carrie Kent, a black midwife, who was unopposed. The election shaped up as a man-woman conflict. The women stuck together, politicking, visiting homes, talking, stating their accomplishments. The men opposed, that's all. "I didn't expect so much politics," said Mayor Anderson almost wistfully. She was not at all sure of the outcome of the vote.

Carrie Kent, councilwoman and cook at nursing home, with a church leader.

It was a landslide. All the women defeated the male candidates by about the same margin, Mayor Anderson keeping her seat against Rogers, 144 to 78. Celia Davis, a black nurse, retained her council post with the largest margin, 150 to 58. The whole exercise pointed up some other differences in Walthourville and similar small towns:

• There are 237 voters registered in the city; 227 voted. "Two or three were sick, maybe in the hospital," said the mayor. "A couple were out of town, and the rest just bogged down and didn't make it to the polls in time."

• What began as a male-female fight developed into an election by people. "More men were pulling for us than against," said Mayor Anderson. "More came to us and encouraged us. It was whole families."

• None of the women take the $75- to $150-a-month salaries to which they are entitled.

The women are humming along in their jobs as city mothers, thinking about new projects—water, sewers and so on—and since they took over, city limit signs have been swung and 40 street lights are in place. So if Walthourville is only a wide place in the road a motorist might miss if he blinked, he will be able to find it now even in the dark.

Still, Walthourville isn't one, great agape. Mayor Anderson's happiness is tinged with disillusionment. During the campaign, the other side had charged that the women had chased a factory out of town with taxes. "Nobody has any taxes," said the mayor, as if she could hardly believe anyone could say such a cruel thing. "They said a lot of things that weren't true." Her kindly velvet voice was touched with the slightest bitterness. She hadn't expected so much politics. ●

Molene Burke, town clerk and treasurer, works in Mayor Anderson's store.

On the other side of the tracks

Nearly three years after the courts ordered the Delta town of Shaw, Miss., to equalize municipal services in its black neighborhoods, over half the black population still lives on dirt-rutted streets

By Harry Hurt

Denny Moore's Shady Nook Key Club is a kind of segregationist temple in the cotton country town of Shaw, Mississippi (pop. 2,506), located as it is a few blocks off U.S. Highway 61, on the "right" side of Porter's Bayou, catty-corner from the Bank of Shaw and the Chinese people's grocery store. The sign on the frosted window says, "Private, Members Only," but if you're white and not too scraggly looking, all you have to do is knock on the two-way mirror that takes up the top half of the front door and pretend like you're fooling with a key. Then old Denny himself, a lean, bright-eyed septuagenarian with a wrinkled, triangular face, will lumber over in his full-length white apron and black string tie and invite you on in to eat some of the best beet pie, barbecued chicken and fresh fruit homemade ice cream in the entire Mississippi Delta.

On the other side of Denny Moore's mirror, time seems stuck like a broken record on a "Great American Goldies" social jukebox. The walls and shelves are covered and crowded with a close to complete set of Miss America pictures, including five-foot-high black and white portraits of Mary Ann Mobley and Linda Lee Meade, Mississippi's *two* Miss Americas, and there are wooden booths and a long linoleum counter with a brass foot rail and swivel stools, just like in the old corner drugstores. Denny Moore has been serving up his Sunday finest to the lily-white sons and daughters of Shaw in these discreet surroundings for just about as long as anyone in town cares to remember. And since the days when he first pleased folks with the original batch of his now famous cantalope ice cream, he's become a kind of unofficial town father.

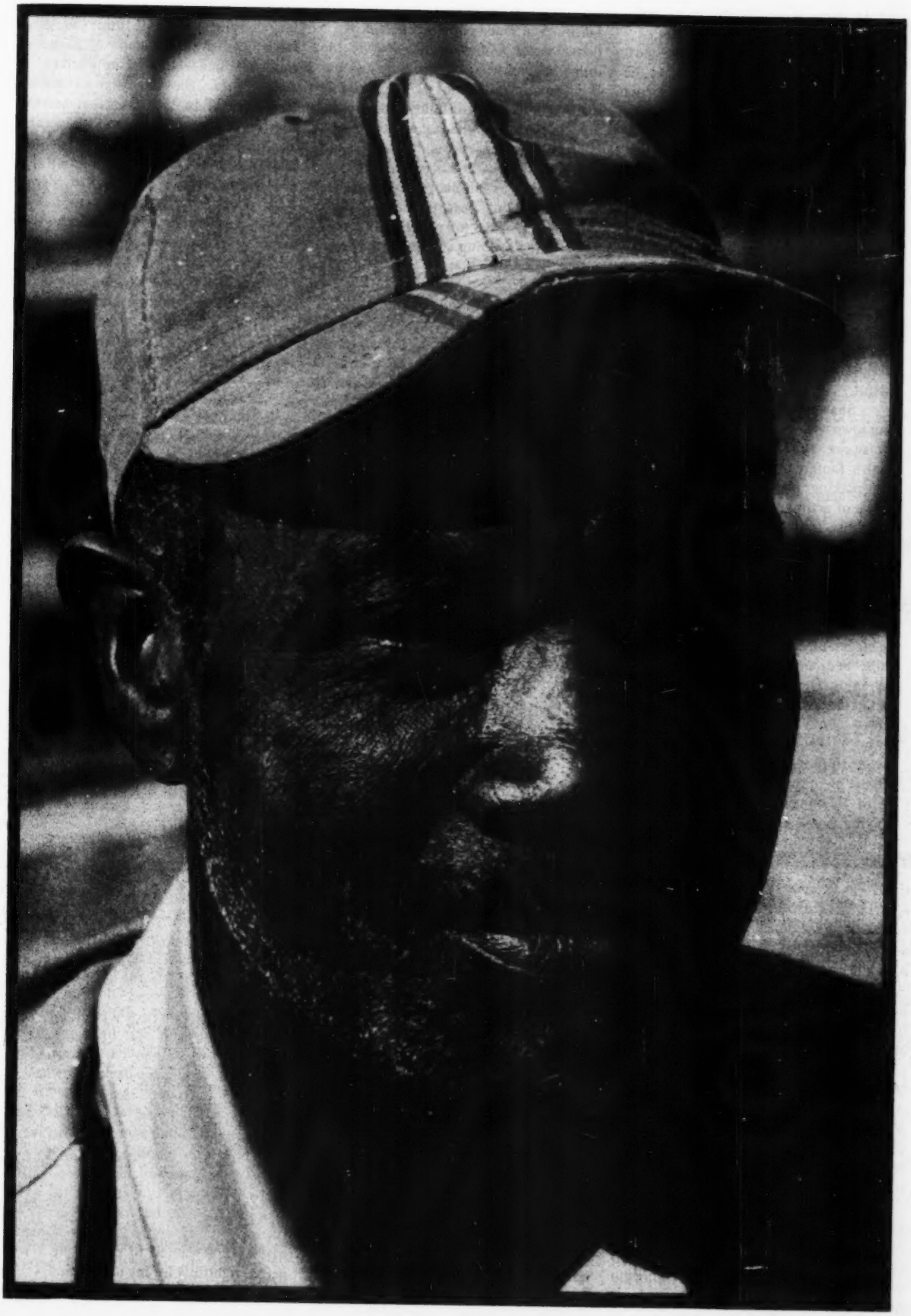
"Now, I don't want to take up for the niggers," Mr. Moore was saying one day last summer, "but they did have some pretty bad roads—some of 'em was downright impassable. 'Course I don't know what my nephew Ancil Cox would say about them wantin' to pave streets that ain't even thirty feet wide. You know, some of 'em got their houses right in the middle of the streets, gardens and everything. . . ."

What Denny Moore was talking about was the only thing that ever aroused any kind of national curiosity about his languid little town. Back in 1966, a group of outside liberal lawyers led by Melvyn Leventhal of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., picked the town of Shaw as the test site for an innovative new civil rights suit. Its purpose: to force an end to racial discrimination in the provision of municipal services to parts of cities and towns blithely referred to as "the other side of the tracks"; and, in the process, to stimulate a little community activism by black residents of Shaw.

Denny Moore's nephew, Ancil Cox, won the case of *Andrew Hawkins v. The Town of Shaw* for the town at the Federal District Court in Greenville, Miss. Then the Legal Defense Fund lawyers appealed to the enigmatically liberal 5th U.S. Circuit Court in New Orleans, and on March 27, 1972, a sixteen-judge panel ruled in favor of the black plaintiffs. All of a sudden, the town of Shaw found itself under a mandate to install and/or improve streets, water mains, sewers, fire hydrants and streetlights in its historically ignored black neighborhoods. What's more, the town could not spend any more money on improvements of services to its 1,000 white citizens until services to its 1,500 black citizens were equalized.

Hotshot civil rights lawyers and urban law experts like Harvard Law School professor Charles Haar called the decision in *Hawkins v. Shaw* "as important as the 1954 Brown case was in the field of education." Not only had a court actually ordered a municipality to *spend* money—a prerogative traditionally reserved for legislative bodies—but it had done so in a town where the black plaintiffs were part of a voting majority. Conceivably, lawsuits could force any city or town in the country to clean up its black slum areas before catering further to white neighborhoods. The costs resulting from such suits could be enormous, their effects overwhelming. Almost immediately, complaints citing *Hawkins v. Shaw* as a precedent were filed in Alabama, South

Plaintiff Andrew Hawkins, whose victory was as important as the 1954 Brown case.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN MILLER

Dakota, New York, Washington, D.C., and in other Mississippi towns.

Meanwhile, back in Shaw, most white folks didn't pay much mind to the court's decision. The national media people bombarded the town for a day or so, and "old" Mayor P.M. Bennett fussed and fumed for a while, and protested from the steps of his furniture store that "we'd been makin' improvements in the nigra areas all along." But everybody knew that all he'd really been doing was wasting more time and treasury money by being stubborn about the lawsuit. That in itself may have irked folks enough to help vote him out of office in 1973, after over 20 years as mayor. But then again, folks in Shaw really aren't all that concerned with politics, much less with some civil rights lawsuit.

Shaw is just a slow dying old Delta farm town with a couple of cotton gins, a few stores, and only one of the New South's fanfared factories, a small garment-making plant. The town has no chance of getting to be the size of Cleveland, Miss. (pop. 13,327), the county seat 10 miles up 61, or the size of even greater Greenville, Miss. (pop. 39,648), the so-called liberal stronghold 30 miles south. And a good many folks are just as glad. They can simply commute to their jobs in the bigger, dirtier, more prosperous towns, while "bedrooming" in Shaw, where they can enjoy Denny Moore-Miss America lives in the comfort of the big-beam 1920's homes along Porter's Bayou and the newer, ranch-style houses south of the bayou. Hunting, fishing and bridge partners are plentiful, and there's even a handful of Faulkner/Steinbeck-style characters for occasional diversion. Like the "funny old" Chinese people who run one of the grocery stores; and big, bald-headed Willie Sandroni, the town goat who runs the pool hall; and old Charley T, the white sharecropper who's been living with a black woman since before his 1948 Oldsmobile was even on the drawing boards. In fact, Shaw's got at least one of just about every type there is: successful small businessmen like "new" Mayor Davis Burns, who owns an electrical contracting company; a younger college educated crowd like Larry and Barney Chiz, who are taking over their father's Dixie Tobacco Company, Delta-wide distributors of everything from shaving cream to chewing gum; there's even one or two longhairs who you'll find talking about anything from "hooka pipes" to high-speed color photography.

Harry Hurt lives in Cambridge, Mass., and has written for The Real Paper *and the Harvard* Crimson.

But as for that lawsuit, well, that hardly even made coffee table talk in the better white homes of Shaw. The big thing, beyond what lady in the bank has been running off with whom, the only really political kind of thing, has been the schools. How the public schools have gone 90 percent black and all downhill, and how the private academies are starting to cost as much as full-fledged colleges. Besides, you didn't need to read all those court case statistics to know that blacks in Shaw weren't getting any services. Even a stranger could see that.

About the only way for a stranger to find Andrew Hawkins' house is by word of mouth, stopping to ask directions every hundred yards or so in front of one of the sagging brown shacks with the barefoot children playing in the bare dirt yard and the wash hung out on the line to dry and the snowy-haired old people sitting on the porches in broken-down chairs, all of them like familiar ghosts from the Civil Rights '60s and the Bobby Kennedy rural poverty tours, each of them pointing to a different stump or clump or tree that has served as a typical street sign in the Johnson Addition, one of the three race-blighted mud flats that contain most of Shaw's tax-paying citizens.

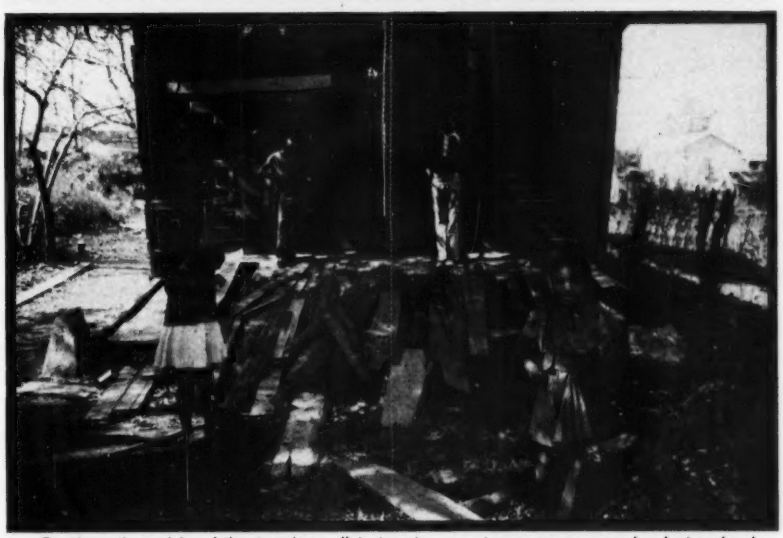
Mr. Hawkins, a 55-year-old black carpenter, was waiting on the steps of the four-room, wood-frame house he shares with a son, a daughter and three of his 12 grandchildren. He had just spent the better part of the day fixing up an old woman's house over in the Promised Land Addition, and he showed the signs of hard labor: his green cap was pulled down over his unshaven face, his wrinkled print shirt was flecked with holes, and on his breath there was a hint of an after-work nip of gin. "I sure am glad ya'll came to take a look around," he said, lifting his short, stocky torso from the steps, " 'cause they sure ain't done what they supposed to."

To Mr. Hawkins, who was named lead plaintiff in the municipal services suit, that was nothing new. In the early '60s, he was an official of the feisty but ill-fated Freedom Labor Party, a group that tried unsuccessfully to organize Mississippi's black farm workers. Later, he testified in Washington against the confirmation of Mississippi Sen. James O. Eastland as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, telling the disbelieving senators of the slave-like conditions on Eastland's 1,000-acre plantation a few miles from Shaw. The lawsuit against the town, like many other civil rights projects, had again shown Mr. Hawkins that it was right next to impossible to get the white men to do "what they supposed to," and hard enough just to get his own intimidated black neighbors to join a struggle.

Hawkins before Congress in '65: higher taxes than whites and few services.

"We started off with about sixty people that signed petitions [for the suit], but it finally boiled down to about eighteen when the white folks found out about it," Hawkins recalled. "Old Mayor Bennett and his people would ask folks when they came to pay their light and water bills, 'Eh, they tell us you suin' us?' And the people would keep backin' down. You know, a lot of people here work for the whites, and they would just withdraw their names. A lot of 'em thought it was just a joke. But I wasn't worried because I was a tax-payin' citizen just like anybody else. We was payin' more taxes than the white people was payin', but we wasn't gettin' no services. And as long as I was havin' to pay my taxes, I wanted to make sure I was gettin' rightfully for my tax dollar."

But despite his 35 years of tax-



On the other side of the tracks: dirt streets, no storm sewers and substandard housing. Below: Hawkins' grandchildren, left background and right foreground.

paying in Shaw and the legal victory he and his co-plaintiffs won in the 5th Circuit Court, the only improvements Mr. Hawkins has seen in his neighborhood or in any of the other black sections of town are the installation of a few badly needed fire hydrants and the replacement of some but not all of the old bare bulb street lights with modern mercury vapor fixtures. Nearly three years since the 5th Circuit Court's so-called landmark decision, the statistical evidence compiled by the Legal Defense Fund attorneys for the lawsuit still provides an accurate description of the differences between Shaw's black and white neighborhoods. For example, while 95 percent of the whites in town live on paved streets with underground sewers or well-maintained drainage ditches, Mr. Hawkins and over half the blacks in Shaw live on rutted dirt streets. No black neighborhoods have underground storm sewers, and over 20 percent of Shaw's black families are not even served by sanitary sewers. Water pressure is inadequate all over town, but it is lowest in two areas that

The only improvements in the black sections of town are the installation of a few fire hydrants and the replacement of some old street lights

together contain 63 percent of the black population. The large black section called the Promised Land Addition is served by 2-inch and 1¼-inch water mains, while the majority of the white population is served by 6-inch water mains. What's more, many black people in Shaw complain of further racial discrimination in types of services untouched by the lawsuit—like garbage pickup and police protection.

Now the town's failure to provide these and other types of municipal services to its black neighborhoods has not, in and of itself, made those neighborhoods into slums. Even if the town provided silver-plated sewer systems and streets paved with gold, many—perhaps most—black people in Shaw would continue to live in substandard housing without indoor plumbing or indoor toilets simply because they still would not be able to afford new homes to put on their golden

streets or new toilets to hook up to their silver sewers. But if the town's racial neglect in providing municipal services has not *created* its slum areas, it has greatly *contributed* to their dilapidated condition, and it does preclude efforts at home improvement by those black families who can afford it. This situation is all the more egregious in Shaw since each homeowner pays a flat tax rate, and black homeowners—i.e., taxpayers—constitute a clear majority.

As Mr. Hawkins led the way through the town's ramshackle black neighborhoods last summer, it appeared that conditions would remain the same for many years to come. Stacks of pipe for sewers and water mains lay abandoned around the open ditches, and there was no sign of work in progress anywhere. Town officials were then saying that contracts had been awarded for water and sewer construction and bids were being opened for street paving. But they also warned that inflation had driven the cost of court-ordered improvements up from an original estimate of $200,000 to nearly $750,000. "Now they tellin' us they gonna have to raise the water rates, the sewage rates and the garbage rates, and maybe issue bonds, too," Mr. Hawkins said ruefully. "So all the costs are gonna come back right on us."

In May 1972, two months after the suit bearing her and her husband's name was won, Mary Lou Hawkins was shot and killed by a black policeman. The cop was cleared and all the records destroyed

Part of the problems Mr. Hawkins and his neighbors face in "getting rightfully" for their tax dollars may stem from the fact that the town of Shaw, which is 60 percent black, has only one black town official, the town clerk. In fact, there are few black political, educational or even ministerial leaders at all. Mr. Hawkins' wife, Mary Lou, a big, burly, vociferous woman, was something of a community activist. But in May 1972, less than two months after the municipal services suit

On the white side of the tracks: ranch-style homes, sewers and, (above) at the local hangout, a sense of time standing still.

bearing her husband's name and her name was decided in their favor, she was shot and killed by a black policeman temporarily serving on Shaw's four-man police force. A hearing was held, the policeman summarily cleared of any wrongdoing, and all records destroyed.

"Retaliation—to my way of thinking, the whole thing was just another way of getting back at the Hawkins family for being so active," said Gregory Flippins, a tall, amply proportioned 23-year-old black man, as his three children played about his trailer home not far from the Hawkins house. Although his close-cropped hair and even-tempered speech hardly evoke the popular image of a radical, Flippins has a reputation around some parts of Shaw as a "staunch militant." He helped organize a series of marches after

The town is full of Faulkner types: above, Willie Sandroni.

Mrs. Hawkins was shot that led to the resignation of the policeman involved. Then, in 1973, he committed one of the most audacious of all political acts. He and a slate of five black candidates ran against Davis Burns and his all-white slate for the offices of mayor and alderman. As usual, the lines were pretty clearly divided on election day, with the blacks standing on one side of the street and the whites on the other, each group trying to keep track of who shows up and who votes for whom. But in the '73 race, to hear Flippins *and* some local whites tell it, white poll workers were going into the voting booths with allegedly illiterate black citizens to make sure they could work the levers properly. Black voter apathy, alleged "fear of militants" and low registration aside, the presence of white faces in the voting booths cost Flippins and his slate dearly, and all lost by clear margins, despite a majority black voter turnout. Flippins filed complaints of election irregularities at the voting booths and elsewhere, with the FBI, but has still received no answer.

"What we're trying to do now is form an organization called Blacks United for a Better Community," Flippins, who majored in political science at nearby Delta State College, said as he sat amid stacks of books like *Without Marx or Jesus* and *The Making of a Black Mayor* and volumes of the Mississippi Code. "We're trying to deal with problems at all levels: keeping kids from being kicked out of school for no reason; seeing that the curriculum is up to par; getting some industry in this town that can give black people some jobs. There's just no employment for black males in Shaw except for seasonal work in the gins. The teachers and storekeepers and other people who occupy a professional type status here have been making about $6,000 a year, but the other people in the community haven't been able to make much money at all. . . ."

As Denny Moore went on about the fresh figs he was going to pick for a new batch of homemade ice cream, the Honorable Ancil L. Cox, town attorney, strode in through the two-way mirrored door of the Shady Nook and sat down to a heaping plate of barbecued chicken. Although Ancil had been the "loser" in the municipal services suit, the precedents established in *Hawkins v. Shaw* had since lost their first (and perhaps last) major test in a large urban area, the Anacostia section of predominantly black Washington, D.C. And the Legal Defense Fund lawyers' dreams of stimulating black community activism in Shaw had largely failed to materialize. Indeed, it would be years more before even the physical improvements would be finished. So Ancil had, in effect, been right all along, and far from a "loser," he had kept his job with the town while "old" Mayor Bennett had been voted out of office.

Now you might expect a man like that to be a big, tall, ass-kicking attorney with arms massive enough to match his cerebrum. But Ancil is . . . well, he's almost a midget, certainly not an inch over 4 feet 10, with a bald head and a tiny, turned-up nose that invite unkind comparisons with a well-known porcine cartoon character. Of course, physical appearance really has no bearing on the size of a man's ideas or the weight of his opinions. Indeed Ancil proposed "bulldozin' " the black areas and replatting them as the only way of avoiding what blacks in Shaw would end up with now; "a deterioratin' slum area—only with hard surface streets." In fact, he had an intriguing if financially impossible solution for Shaw. There was more.

"We're gonna do what the court says, but I never could understand why, where you have a voting majority, the courts arbitrarily assume that they can plan better than the people themselves," Ancil declared. "I think the judges remembered the sections 'on the other side of the tracks' in their towns, and just wanted to make law so it wouldn't happen again. It was a fine opportunity for 'em, except for the voting majority aspect. I mean, that kind of goes against our thoughts of republican-type government."

But what about Flippins' charges of election irregularities? Wasn't it odd that there was only one black city official?

"Not when you know the people," Ancil replied. "Young Gregory . . . uh . . . Flippins? . . . was defeated in the last election, and I don't think there's ever been an election where the losers did not charge irregularities. I remember an election that was held there in Chicago where they charged a whole lot of irregularities. Besides, many of the older blacks will not necessarily support some of the younger militants. The whole black community was not behind Andrew and Mary Lou Hawkins. But then, I really don't know what they were thinkin'. Part of it is we'll never totally know *what* they see, and vice versa. We live in totally different worlds—obviously."

And with that, Ancil began to look through Denny Moore's two-way mirror at the people going in and out of the town clinic across the street. Each white would use the entrance marked "WHITE," each black or Chinese the entrance marked "COLORED." This the people did by custom instead of law, never looking back at Ancil, perhaps because they could not see him or old Denny Moore, but only their own reflections. ●

The Iowa experience

By Gail Godwin

The Fiction Workshop is a pressure cooker of raw creativity set down in the middle of a prairie, where competition and envy and spleen and angelic flights of inspiration abound. A former Iowa City resident looks back

One night last spring my telephone rang in Stone Ridge, N.Y. "This is Jane Howard," a pleasant voice said. "We haven't met but Lucy Rosenthal at Book-of-the-Month Club said you'd been at the Iowa Writers Workshop. I've been invited to teach there in the fall and was wondering if you could tell me what to expect."

In answer to this same question, I had once told novelist Ann Birstein, "Well, it's very quiet . . . and it snows a lot." So she set off for Iowa with all her fur coats and the serious books she'd been meaning to read. Later she said, "I am exhausted. You said *quiet*. I've been to so many parties in Iowa I look forward to the relative quiet of New York."

Who could tell anyone "what to expect" from such a subjective place as Iowa City, where the Writers Workshop is as much a part of America's literary myth as Bloomsbury is England's? There is a different Iowa City in every writer's head, and not just the considerable number of writers who have studied there, taught there or visited there to read their works. Even those who are not writers, those who have never set their feet on Midwestern soil, can tell you all about "Iowa." It's that writing factory in the middle of the prairie . . . the place where John Cheever had such a good time in 1973 and Nelson Algren had such a bad time in 1966 . . . and where Philip Roth wrote about how hard it was to buy a bottle of liquor. It's the place where so-and-so's wife ran off with the poet so-and-so . . . on the other hand, it's the place where Hortense Calisher met Curtis Harnack and married him. (Now they both write at Yaddo, the artist's retreat at Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where Mr. Harnack serves as director.)

One writer will tell you he blossomed at Iowa; another, that Iowa killed his young talent like an early frost.

Lying in a dark bedroom in Stone Ridge (I had been asleep, though it was early), I tried to give Jane Howard (author of *A Different Woman*) a sort of free-flowing collage of my Iowa experience, the Workshop in *my* head, how it had been for me as a student and would-be writer who arrived at Iowa in the spring of 1967, and how it had been for me as a novelist who came back to teach in the Workshop five years later.

I think I described Iowa's rolling hills (most people imagine it dead flat) and how the curling Iowa River would be right outside the new English Building, where she'd be teaching (founder Paul Engle's legendary Quonset huts have been torn down now), and I think I played up the social side of things more than I did with Ann. Hopefully, Jane would attend one of Vance Bourjaily's pig roasts at Red Bird Farm; undoubtedly she would partake of the Leggetts' very Jamesian evenings in their tall Victorian house on Summit Street, when the celebrities on their reading tours began to flow through in October. It was sitting next to John Hawkes at the Leggetts' dinner table that I got the idea for something I'm writing now: he had made a fascinating remark about men and women. I remember, also, with pleasure, a leisurely chat with William Styron about the problems of writers' productivity, in the Leggetts' "red room," with a fire blazing in the grate. I tried to give Jane Howard as many specifics as possible and avoid generalizations.

The one generalization is this: every young writer arrives in a state of fervent hope. To be at Iowa at all is a small miracle (only one out of every twelve is accepted), and, in September, the Iowa landscape, with its high corn and apples and colts grazing on grassy hillocks, is a metaphor of productivity. Even for those February arrivals, the white silent spaces seem an auspicious beginning. I arrived in the snowstorm of '67, and even when Ozark lost my luggage I saw this as a symbol: I was to enter upon my calling with only the clothes on my back.

A new student's expectations remind one of a newborn babe: *everyone is out there, waiting to nurture me.* But soon he discovers he has 60 or so siblings to share the limelight with; furthermore, the place is inhabited by many famous ghosts. (Flannery O'Connor's Master of Fine Arts thesis is constantly being checked out of the library. It's a volume of early stories, typewritten, which she would surely never have finished if she had lived in every room and apartment Iowa landlords say she has—she would have been moving every day.) The newly arrived apprentice also discovers that his "Masters" are humans with their own hopes and peeves, the Stars of tomorrow, the Names of yesterday, who contend with spiritual malaise, bad reviews and blocked creativity at the same time they try to inspire their students.

Inspiration comes in many styles. Kurt Vonnegut, my first teacher, inspired me simply by sitting with his feet up, amiably smoking, in exactly the same non-obtrusive posture each week. He wrote things like "sandbagging flashback" or "first-rate" in very light pencil in the margins of my stories, but refused to impose further. "Do you think I should make a novel out of this story?" I asked. "It's fine as it is . . . ," he said. "I've decided to make a novel out of it," I said the next week. "Good idea," he said. I rushed home and wrote the first draft in 21 days so he could read it before he left. He proclaimed himself pleased and told an editor about it. Then he departed, innocent of the world fame that was to meet him in Barnstable,

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"The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off the big restaurant rip-off that's serving up mass-produced frozen dishes as expensive house specialties. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill just about anybody they want to. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

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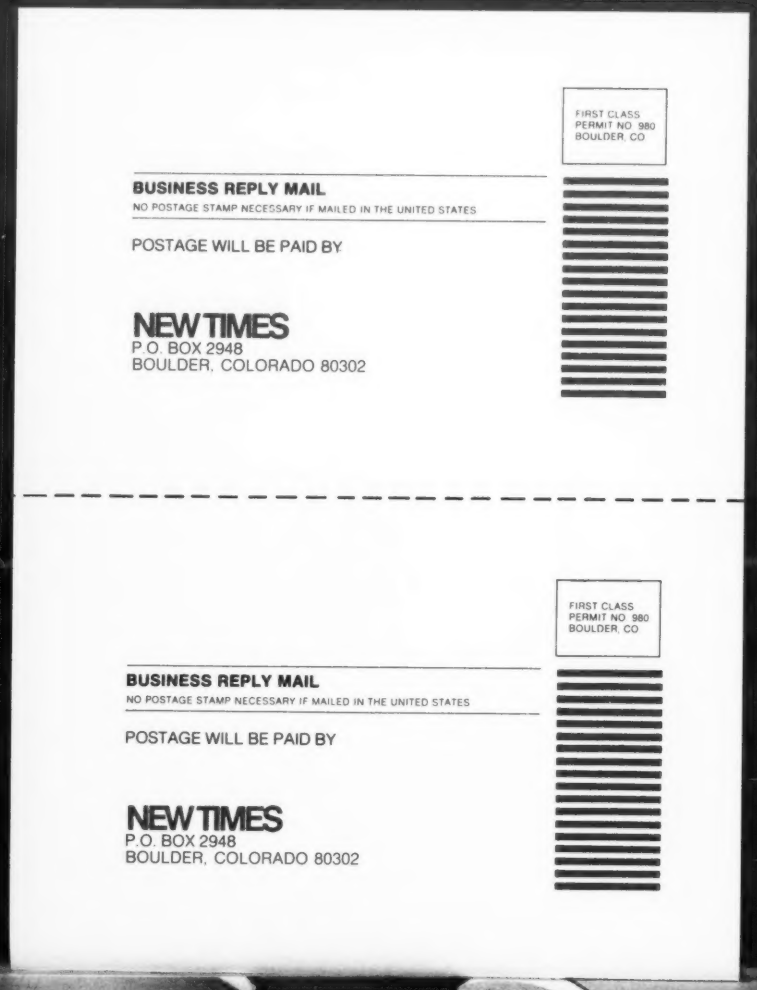
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NEW TIMES

The Mouse that Roars

Mass.

The editor turned down my book, but I had my first draft. Two drafts, two agents and two years later, David Segal at Harper & Row took it.

Robert Coover was the most generative (how he loved that word!) teacher I had at the Workshop. We called him "The Magician" behind his back, just as some of us had called Vonnegut "Guru." I seem to remember him always in motion, suspended several millimeters from the earth on a current of his own enthusiasm, and always carrying a stack of computer cards, on which he took notes whenever he had an idea. I don't know why computer cards. Perhaps they were a convenient size, or he got them free or something; but they seemed magic somehow making us *imagine what might be written on them.* When Coover arrived in the fall of '67, the little-known author of *The Origin of the Brunists,* only a handful of students signed up for his section. Workshop students were the most conservative of snobs that year, and Vance Bourjaily, the "name" writer, actually had to turn down over half of those who wanted to get into his class. By the second semester, the word about Coover had spread. Someone said he had told them he wanted to change the shape of American fiction. Someone else had been in his *Don Quixote* seminar. I somehow squeezed into his Workshop section. When I showed him my first story, a tame account of a young couple who realizes their marriage is over because of the relief they feel when they find an old tramp has broken into their apartment and gone to sleep, Coover said, "You ought to try for more; this is very accurate, probably, about a certain kind of relationship, but . . . ." So I wrote him a story about a girl who kept a dragon in her apartment and, in a burst of extra energy, a story, which took me half the time, about a sorrowful woman who retreats from her husband and child. "I bet you think I liked the dragon story the best," Coover said, rushing in on a snowy day from his house in West Branch. "Well, you're wrong. The other is a gem. You've *taken a situation as far as it can go.* You ought to try more of that." He also taught a class called Ancient Exemplary Fictions. The book list included *The Arabian Nights, The Book of Revelation,* Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England,* Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* One day he rushed in with a stack of blue books and said we were going to write a "group story" about a medieval monk who has just dug up, a little to his discomfiture, a buried manuscript that contains a dialogue between Scheherazade and Ovid. We did it. Leafing through my copy now, six years later, I am amazed at the inspired passages and the coherence in this story written by a dozen people. Perhaps we need more of the spirit of Chartres and less of the spirit of Competition. "Yes, to be sure," Ovid says, in our story, "the story vibrates with transformations, and it is these which have inspired me to work my own transformations with the tale." And so we learned that the body of literature was a great funhouse of a legacy, for us to tap, to rewrite, if necessary to *abuse.* That magic semester, all of us wrote like mad: fairy tales, dog stories, spoofs, myths. The poets wrote fiction and the fiction writers wrote poems. Jane Barnes Casey (whose *I, Krupskaya,* a fictional biography of Lenin's wife, was published last year) was very pregnant with her first child, but managed to write a funny, short novel that was a parody on the upper-class Ivy League novel.

When the Workshop is at its best, it buzzes like a generator. Energies feed other energies. One is not in competition with writers of the past or with one another; only in competition with one's own best self.

Vonnegut wrote things like "sandbagging flashback" or "first-rate" in very light pencil in the margins of my stories, but refused to impose further

Preoccupation with competition can obsess a young writer (or a writer of any age) and drain his creative energies. He becomes obsessed with comparing himself to others. Instead of seeing all writers as participants in building a body of literature, he sees other writers as threats or measurements against himself. I often ran across my students in the library reference section, brooding over the volumes of *Contemporary Authors,* furtively subtracting birth dates from dates of first publications.

I would receive letters:

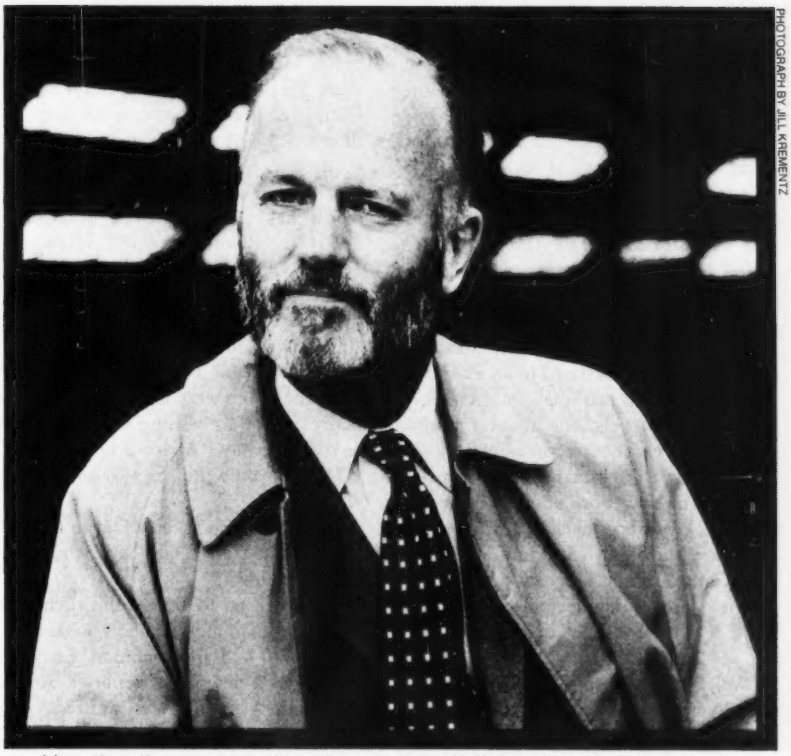
Dear Miss Godwin: I certainly did admire *The Perfectionists.* I am extremely curious to know how long it took you to write it. Was the story based on your personal experience? What sort of problems did you have while writing it (how many pages did you write, on the average, per day)? Perhaps you could come over to my place and I could fix whiskey sours, made from an old New Orleans recipe given to me during the war—any war . . . .

A small amount of such "research" is all right. We are, as writers, partially created by the writers we study and admire. But the students in question were spending hours over such comparisons, wasting their own writing time.

What happens if a student stops writing, finds he can't go on? This is a frequent Workshop malady. I think a teacher, or any professionally minded friend, can help. A student once came to me in despair. He had dozens of drafts for the beginning of a story. But after a page or so, each time, he couldn't go on. And yet, not being able to write was making him physically ill. His story was about a boy and girl breaking up. Clearly autobiographical. But one must tactfully suggest that . . . perhaps he was too "close" to his material. I knew he had worked for the Peace Corps somewhere in South America, so I asked him to write some vignettes—short pieces he could finish in a single evening—about people as unlike himself as possible. Within a few weeks he had a collection of these. One was a hilarious first-person account of a happy-sad peasant who kept getting drunk and falling off the bus; one was about a young prostitute, a little touched in the head, who celebrates her wedding to the local doctor—all by herself. The writer's hand got lighter as the stories progressed, and, losing himself in his people, he found himself again.

As a general rule, when young writers make stories from their current experiences, the result is more regurgitation than art. But I recall an exception. A girl in my class brought me a chilling story, around 35 pages, about a girl hitchhiking across the country to see a girlfriend in Colorado. She keeps getting raped by the strangers who pick her up, and when she gets to Colorado her friend has left. "I wonder if a convincing character would repeat her mistake so often," I began, tentatively, in the conference. "That character," my student replied calmly, "was me." But, aside from my reservation, I knew the story was the best she had ever done: landscape details, the gritty-surreal quality of one rape, the rather pastoral mood of another rape, the Kafka-esque "friend in Colorado" who perhaps was never there. It was a case of a writer's material being so strong, it insists

A Workshop graduate and teacher, Gail Godwin has published three novels—most recently, The Odd Woman.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JILL KREMENTZ

More than the average writer-who- teaches, Workshop director John Leggett leaves his ego at home and sets a tone of modest diplomacy.

on being heard. (Vonnegut once said about a similar story: "She earned that story . . . she earned the right to write it.")

John Leggett (whom everybody calls Jack) is well-suited for his role as Workshop director. A novelist himself, a former editor and the author of *Ross and Tom*, Leggett is a seasoned observer—and weatherer—of the ambitions and tempers that blight creativity. He came to Iowa in the spring of 1969, to fill in for Vance Bourjaily, who was taking the semester off to write. At the time, he had just begun the harrowing research for *Ross and Tom* and was rather disheartened by rebuffs from publishers concerning a hoped-for advance. He found Iowa City an excellent environment in which to meditate upon the dangers, both spiritual and commercial, that can kill a writer's talent—and sometimes kill the writers themselves, as in the case of Ross Lockridge and Tom Heggen. He felt called upon to write the story of these two novelists who were destroyed by their perceptions of their own success, and, in Iowa, things kept falling into place. Fort Dodge, Iowa, was Tom Heggen's native home, easily accessible from Iowa City. Leggett found it stimulating to write in the morning and teach in the afternoon, when all Workshop classes meet. "In New York, a writer often finds himself at a loss at what to do with his afternoons." Leggett also had been wrestling unsuccessfully with a technical problem in the book: how to "bridge" the two separate stories, how to make his subject cohere. One day in Iowa, he looked quietly into himself and had the answer: "The bridge and the glue . . . was me." At the end of his first spring at Iowa, George Starbuck, who was resigning as director of the Workshop, asked Leggett if he would like the job. "I thought he was joking," recalls Leggett, "and returned East." But during the summer, John Gerber, chairman of Iowa's English Department, telephoned Leggett and persuaded him to fill in as director for a year, until they could find a permanent replacement. He accepted and returned, toiling away at *Ross and Tom* in the mornings, teaching young writers and trying to find a replacement for himself in the afternoons. After interviewing many prospects, "I decided I could do the job as well as anybody," he recalls. Now he's permanent director.

The man-in-charge sets the tone in any administration. Paul Engle, the poet who founded the Workshop almost 40 years ago, and directed it until 1968, was fiery, rather eccentric and had the reputation of a champion fund-raiser. George Starbuck's tenure had the bemused quality of a poet who suddenly wakes up and finds himself an administrator. Leggett's tone is that of a modest diplomat. More than the average writer-who-teaches, Leggett seems to leave his ego at home, in his writer's study, and,somewhere on his walk or ride from Summit Street, is transformed into an unassuming but effective director. A disarming stammer frequently creeps into his speech when he is dealing with ruffled feelings and conflicting ideologies. He constantly strives to "strike a balance between tradition, continuity and the avant garde."

"The permanent staff, which is Vance and myself, are the 'Squares,' " he laughs. "Then I try to get the current student favorites, people like Stanley Elkin and Leonard Michaels, to come for a semester, or for an intensive three-day session at Iowa." This year, Leggett has invited fiction writers Elkin, Michaels, Edna O'Brien and Henry Bromell to come for these shorter "visiting sessions." And Vance Bourjaily will be teaching a course in some of the longest-lived "Squares," including Boccaccio, Rabelais, Dickens, Dostoevsky and Melville. The other staff members for the '74-'75 term are novelist John Irving (who was once a student in the Workshop) and Jane Howard.

In an atmosphere of competition such as Iowa, where, as one observer dryly put it, "a two-week gloom settles over the entire Workshop when someone sells a story or, God forbid, signs a contract," one of the bitterest sources of contention is "Student Aid."

"When I was in college," Leggett recalls, "Student Aid was something you gave to students who couldn't afford to go on otherwise. But in the Workshop it's become a matter of prestige, a measurement of your worth as a writer."

Every spring, the Workshop faculty assembles, and after some half a dozen meetings, private nightmares, public altercations and much soul-searching on the part of all, awards "Aid" to some 25 or 30 fiction writers, and the same number of poets. The other half of the Workshop students completes the two-year MFA program with no financial assistance.

The most coveted form of Aid is a Teaching-Writing Fellowship. It carries a stipend of $3,800. Normally, four are given to fiction students. (This year there are five.) The Teaching-Writing Fellows are a sort of "Junior Faculty." Each Fellow teaches a section of Undergraduate Workshop and serves as first reader for the flow of incoming manuscripts from candidates for admission to the Graduate Workshop.

Some Teaching-Writing Fellows become well-known writers later; many are never heard from again. Novelists Tom McHale (*Alinsky's Diamond*) and Mark Dintenfass (*Figure 8*) were Fellows,

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to give two fairly recent examples. But landing a Fellowship is no assurance of later "coups." Leggett is unusually optimistic about the current Fellows: three men and two women, representing a wide spectrum of interests and writing styles—and even geographical locations. Allan Gurganus was at Sarah Lawrence before he came to Iowa; in his first year at Iowa he sold stories to *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker*. (All Fellows are second-year students.) Ben Brooks, who is working on a novel about hostilities in a commune, comes from Vermont. Joanne Meschery, from Nevada, is married to an ex-basketball pro and has two small children. She is writing two novels: one about a minister in Reno, one about professional basketball. Barbara Grossman comes from Bard College in New York and writes, according to a Workshop teacher, "psychological stories disturbingly close to home." Robert Chibka, from Yale, says his teacher, writes careful, intellectual stories, some with a "Coover-esque" quality.

John Irving, who sold his first novel, *Setting Free the Bears*, when he was a 24-year-old Workshop student, will be teaching his new novel, *The 158-Pound Marriage*, to Workshop students this fall, along with the two novels that, he says, helped shape it: John Hawkes' *Blood Oranges* and Ford Maddox Ford's *The Good Soldier*. The course, which also includes Virginia Woolf, Malamud and Waugh, is focused on novelists who use "manners and morals" for their materials. It is on the subject of materials that Irving feels most optimistic about his new crop of students. "They're a bit older this year. Many of the men have been in a war, many of the women have been through marriage and motherhood. They have something to write about."

Lately, the Iowa Workshop—the whole concept of workshops where students are "taught to write"—has come under fire by two of its own former faculty members: Nelson Algren and Kurt Vonnegut.

"Why has the Iowa Writers Workshop, in its 35 years of existence, not produced a single novel, poem or short story worth rereading?" asked Algren in a *Chicago Tribune Magazine* article.

Vonnegut, in a Guest Word in the Sunday *Times Book Review*, proclaims the notion that "a college's best writers are of course in the English Department" a false one, and suggests (I *think* he is serious) a scheme where "real writers from any part of the campus, or even articulate hobos passing through town" could receive advice about writing from those professionals either down on their luck or drying out.

I think Algren's diatribe on Iowa goes much deeper than the phenomenal poker losses he is said to have suffered there. He believes a writer's talent is better stimulated in pool rooms, in the company of convicts and dope addicts—and it certainly worked out that way for the author of *The Man with the Golden Arm*. But the world has already proved him wrong about the "nothing worth rereading." Flannery O'Connor's place is assured in American letters. And I myself, just last night, reread a Joy Williams' story called "The Lover" for about the tenth time.

Vonnegut is a kind, ecologically concerned man who happens to think too many people are writing who don't have anything to say. (At Iowa he once said: "God lets you write; he also lets you not write.")

I am often asked, "Did Iowa teach you to write?" or "Did you teach anyone to write at Iowa?"

I will try to answer this. I came to Iowa later than most students. I was in my late 20s. I had lived abroad six years, worked as a newspaper reporter, American Embassy employee, waitress, fact-checker, proofreader in a management consultant firm and at assorted other occupations. I was, briefly, a scientology auditor at the Hubbard Institute in London. I once *did* give a private writing course to a real hobo, who wrote his "assignments" sitting up all night in the Central Post Office in London. And, Nelson Algren, I even spent time in a Fort Lauderdale jail, to do a story on women's prison conditions.

The critic Robert Scholes once told me that a good writer needs Passion, Order and Recklessness. When I arrived at Iowa in the blizzard of '67, I had passion and recklessness but no order. I could produce journalism and journals (I estimate that at that time I had written two million words in my dozens of journals), but I had not acquired, had not been still enough to acquire, what the *I Ching* calls Chung Fu, the inner truth that comes to "the superior man" who abides in his room and speaks his words so well that "he meets with assent at a distance of more than a thousand miles."

Iowa City was my Chung Fu. It provided the stillness. In those first weeks, when it snowed and snowed, I set up my typewriter in a little apartment (which, of course, had once been rented to Flannery O'Connor), and, for the first time, there were no distractions. There was nothing to do *but* write. Now this could have been accomplished anywhere lonely and snowy enough, perhaps, but the reason I felt so focused was because I felt myself part of the Iowa Myth. (I was now at the famous

Writers Workshop where . . . I had been accepted when so many others had not . . . in six days, five days, four days, *Kurt Vonnegut himself* would be reading the pages now coming out of my old machine.) I was lucky, too, in falling in, almost immediately, with a small group who felt the same way I did about writing. It was a vocation, something we couldn't not do. We thought of ourselves as people destined to write for our salvation. We read one another's work as soon as we had anything to show. We had, in that sense, an instant public. (I can still hear Jane Casey saying, "Here we are! Hot from the presses of my neuroses!") We encouraged each other. (John Casey, driving me home from their farmhouse one snowy evening: "But Gail, can't you see the flowering in your own work?" He had just sold TWO stories to *The New Yorker*. I had asked him, "Do you think I'll ever publish anything?") We edited each other, both in the Workshop sessions, where stories are put on mimeographed worksheets, and privately. Lucy Rosenthal, who had been a publishers' reader before she came to Iowa, gave up a whole weekend to go through my twice-rejected *Perfectionists*, page by page, saying where it worked and where it didn't and what she wished there was more of.

What happened to me, and I would say about a third of the students who go to Iowa, was what Leggett says should *ideally* happen in the Workshop environment. I was stimulated by competition (whereas I might have been defeated, under different circumstances, perhaps); I learned many technical shortcuts from people like Lucy; I tried things I wouldn't have tried, because of people like Coover. I wrote more pages, because I was sure of an immediate audience, than I would have done if I had been holed up in a garret of an anonymous big city—or in jail (though the private part of the writing process demands a jail-like self-incarceration). In the above ways, yes, Iowa "taught me to write."

What about my own students? I had one who needed no technical help. He was a pro. He had been writing forever. He had plenty to write about. He is, I am convinced, The Real Artist. But he had been plunged into a half-year of bitterness because he had received no "Student Aid." It lowered his estimation of himself, and when I met him he was working on cars. In our first Workshop session, he did his best to insult me. What he needed was for someone professional to tell him, "You're worth it. You're a real writer." I told him he was wonderful. (He later did get some Aid.) That was all it took. He produced several superb stories that year based on the Seven Deadly Sins, and has recently completed a serious novel.

Once I felt the only thing I could do for a student was lend her money. This was a mistake. I finally made her angry at me. Then her life got so awful, she ended up writing some rather magnificent stories—so bitter they were clean. I wish her well.

One of my students wrote an ambitious novel about an ill-fated young Anglo-Saxon king. I had to do research myself before I could judge his novel. How much was his own? How much was "historical"? I told him a king in the tenth century would not say "bitchy." Other than that, all the help he needed from me was suggestions about agents and encouragement that he could find a job to support his wife and child while he continued writing. A pragmatic sort of fellow, he's now working for a wine magazine.

I was able, in some cases, to get people started writing again when they had stopped (as in the case of the Peace Corps boy) and to convince those who were good that they ought to stop feeling sorry for themselves, or worrying about Norman Mailer's age when he first published. I consoled a few by telling them I had been though the same (angst, stagnation, resentment, self-doubt) and that it usually passes.

At the end of the semester, I asked them to write me letters.

"I have felt so cut off and frustrated here," one wrote. "I don't know where I'm at. My husband and I can't decide whether to stay together and I'm on this hilly path of getting to be a writer. These two things seem to be influencing each other. I've been getting more internally strong, but I still can't feel great about Iowa City or the Workshop. Today I started putting together a piece of imaginative fiction. It's called *Love Monster*."

". . . am working on a novel, my first," wrote another girl. "Have finished ten chapters, hope to finish the whole thing this summer. I'm really not interested in anything else right now. My favorite all time book is *Lolita*, just in case you're interested."

"I feel particularly affected by the weather," one boy wrote. "The problem is to accept the effects of the weather and not use it to keep from doing anything. February is the worst. If I can manage to change the weather that will be a real accomplishment."

Every time a student at Iowa completes a story, a chapter of a novel or a poem, he has changed the weather for himself. A few go on to change the weather for others. If we haven't already heard their names today, we may hear them tomorrow. ●

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MOVIES

The ten best and all that jazz

By Frank Rich

I don't know who invented the ten-best list, this quaint ritual by which so many American film critics greet the new year—maybe it was James Agee, but something tells me it might have been Hedda Hopper. I am not a compulsive list-maker myself, but, yes, here I am succumbing to the form—and with a fair amount of gusto, too. It's an exercise not unlike imagining one's ideal soup-to-nuts dinner menu or casting a favorite novel in one's head with all the late and great actors of eras past. Drawing up a ten-best list helps one forget, at least for a moment, all the trash that had to be endured in that quest to discover the occasional pearl.

So—you ask—what kind of year was 1974 in movieland? It started badly and didn't really pick up speed until late spring. There's encouragement to be had about the future: the six American films on the list below are all the works of fairly young directors, each of whom has still better movies to make. For sweeping trends that will put you in good stead at cocktail parties, you had best look to the covers of the newsweeklies, which have a way of postulating a "New Hollywood" every five weeks or so. If you look at *Variety* (and I refuse to break the habit), you'll find that this has been one of the best box-office years for movies since television revolutionized American viewing habits. The only trouble is that all that big dough accrues to a very small number of pictures, most of which seem to star either Charlton Heston or Tom Laughlin.

A good share of the best movies had disappointing runs—which may be less an indication of audience disapproval than of the fact that audiences never even found these films in the first place. Hype is all in the marketplace, and the machine-tooled "blockbusters" seem to get most of it. What I like about the movies on my ten-best list is that they all show signs of creative and intellectual life—even as I notice, to some dismay, that quite a few of them are about death; as a group, these films take the chances worth taking and, whatever their flaws, deliver most of the goods. It's an eclectic list and a highly personal one, but it's based on standards I'm quite objective about. Lists, no matter who makes them, should not be taken all that seriously, however; ideally, they should incite discussion rather than close it off. The ten movies that follow are listed in the order in which they were reviewed in these pages.

ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD EGIELSKI

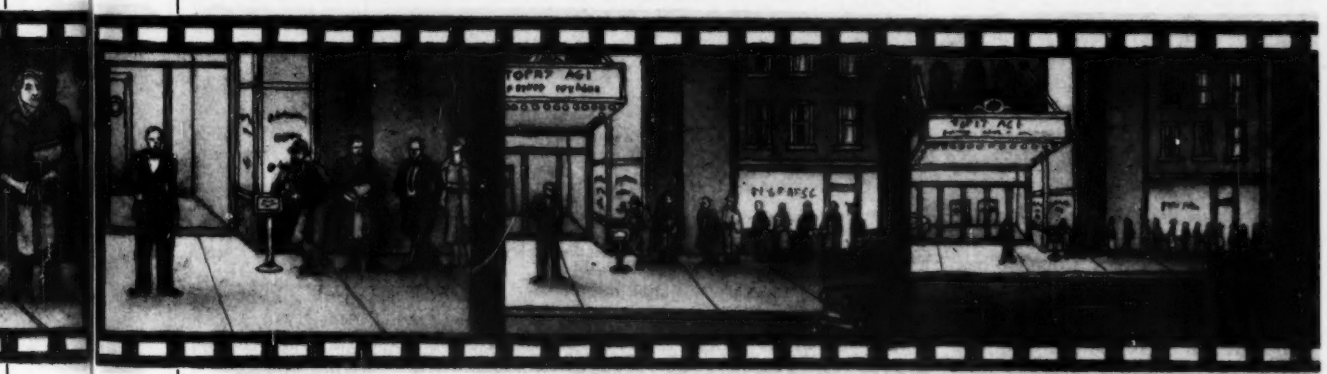
Thieves Like Us A guileless "kid" bank robber (Keith Carradine) and his equally unworldly lover (Shelley Duvall) stumble through the verdant Delta of the 1930s in this, the first of two Robert Altman films to be seen in 1974 (the other was the aimless but not uninteresting *California Split*). If Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* was the apotheosis of '60s liberalism, then *Thieves Like Us* sets the standard for '70s desperation: heroes Bowie and Keechie aren't the products of an unjust Depression but of a torpid culture whose cancers are too insidious to be exorcised by any New Deal. While a lush Altmanesque atmosphere defined by trashy radio dramas, pulp magazines, Father Coughlin broadcasts and a veritable flood of Coca-Cola ultimately suffocates these protagonists, they, like the heroes of Altman's other masterworks (the title characters of *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, detective Philip Marlowe of *The Long Goodbye*), are allowed their share of quirky individuality, even heroism, before confronting their inevitable, tragic demise.

Badlands Another young criminal couple is on the lam in Terrence Malick's first feature film, a fictional retelling of murderer Charley Starkweather's rampage of the 1950s. The movie is an icy, ethereal fairy tale about the terror implicit in ordinary things—the most ordinary of all being Kit (Martin Sheen) and Holly (Sissy Spacek), who look like Norman Rockwell figurines adrift from civilization and running wild. Holly herself narrates the film in a vocabulary that stems from Dick-and-Jane readers and a voice as flat and colorless as the Badlands where her life unravels; as the chasm between her bland monologue and the story's depicted events widens, the tension between word and deed becomes analogous to that of Donald Barthelme's spare modern horror tales. Malick has carved a vision of high-pitched clarity and otherworldly beauty out of the bleakest of human and terrestrial voids.

The Conversation A disorienting, hypnotic and shocking thriller about a pro-

fessional wiretapper who starts to care a bit too much about the subjects of his eavesdropping. A jumbled, fragmented conversation is played incessantly throughout the film until it not only suggests the dimensions of a mysterious crime but forms an ironic counterpoint to the mundane rituals of the wiretapper's own life. There is an appropriately timely message here, but director Francis Ford Coppola is most concerned with using sounds and images to undermine our assumptions about the nature of reality. Star Gene Hackman contributes a brilliant performance as "the best bugger on the West Coast," a James McCord-looking shambles of a man who lives in a sweaty universe where the only colors are sounds.

Going Places (*Les Valseuses*) In his first film French director Bertrand Blier affirms the possibilities, not to mention the sheer rush, of life—even as he works within the confines of an insane carnival of cruelty and death. The story involves two cruel young men of the Atomic Age (Gerard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere) who try to find themselves by roaming over a sterile French countryside and brutalizing people (especially women, the most notable of whom is Jeanne Moreau); that's a tired and empty idea for a movie, but what redeems it is Blier's crazy-quilt pictorial style, heady sense of pace and ferocious wit. The film's continuity is built on a series of explosive developments that keep hurtling us further into the protagonists' world rather than distancing us from it. Anything can happen and most everything does—in one Dickensian twist of the plot Blier's duo has sex with a teenage girl whose panties they had sniffed during a house break-in earlier up the road. An easy movie to hate, perhaps, but hold tight.



Lacombe, Lucien Louis Malle's film about an inarticulate peasant farm boy who joins the gestapo of Vichy France out of boredom is one of the best movies ever made about history: to see it is to understand how the gestures of ordinary people form a web of behavior that defines a society. Malle appreciates that evil is not always recognizable at first glance—that cruelty can grow out of a complex collection of circumstances which, when viewed at close range, can be as distressingly ambiguous as a patch of colored specks on a Pissarro canvas. As a result, the impact of the film transcends the specifics of its setting: there are no easy moral judgments floating around to allow us the security of hindsight. The movie has also been beautifully made and acted; the cast includes Pierre Blaise as the title character, Aurore Clement as the Jewish beauty who shares her bed with him, and the remarkable Holger Lowenadler as the girl's father, a Parisian tailor of boundless civility and bottomless hurt.

Amarcord (*I Remember*) A welcome reunion between Federico Fellini and his literal and creative pasts, *Amarcord* takes us back to a small Italian town of the filmmaker's '30s youth and the sensibility of his best '50s films. It's a dreamy imaginative circus run riot with spectacle, passion, wit and magic. Though the film's cyclical structure is a bit tenuous at times, Fellini has successfully rearranged the elements of his self-contained setting and then bathed those elements in a characteristically iridescent light to come up with a poetic reality that both expresses and redefines his basic material. The people of *Amarcord* have equal affection for the aberrations and the certainties of their environment: they thrill as much to the brief passing of a shimmering ocean liner as to the arrival of a winter's first snow. With Magali Noel as a beautician who embodies the entire town's aspirations to romance and who is this movie's equivalent to the woman in the white sports car of George Lucas' Fellini-indebted *American Graffiti*.

The Phantom of Liberté (*Le Fantôme de la Liberté*) Some people make films, but Luis Buñuel, at 75, continues to dream them. *Phantom* gleams with the organic polish we might associate with a ripe apple; its whole cannot be divided up into components such as "acting," "direction" and "screenplay." Unsurprisingly enough, Buñuel continues to work within the surrealistic scheme he helped invent, and the total reach of the film's interlocking anecdotes destroys the so-called unifying dramatic concepts of time and place along with most other conventions that derive from Western logic. At its best *Phantom* is also hilariously funny, and, if it's not quite as absorbing as *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, it still haunts and nudges our psyches long after we've seen it, reshaping our vision of the real world as only those movies that deal exclusively in the language of film can do.

Phantom of the Paradise Brian De Palma (*Greetings, Sisters*) still makes movies that look a little tacky, but his new film is so bright and amusing that you may not notice. This director sees an America that has learned to stop worrying and love the bomb by turning the specter of nonsensical mass murder into a basis for mass entertainment. His metaphor is show biz, as embodied by Swan (Paul Williams), a record tycoon who controls the imagery (he promotes violent rock) and the actual hardware (his Death Records rubs out its enemies) of holocaust. The film is at its least dazzling when parodying old horror movies and current rock personalities and at its considerable best when grappling with bloody visions of the record-industry-as-doomsday-machine. The hideous electronic phantom of the title (William Finley)—a rock composer who's been disfigured by getting his own hit album's

grooves pressed into his face—is kept alive by wires and amplifiers; like us, he's locked into a fatal embrace with a proliferating technology gone berserk.

A Woman Under the Influence John Cassavetes' film about a working-class housewife's nervous breakdown and subsequent "cure" operates almost at the level of ritual, for this is a movie about people who cannot verbalize the sources of their heartbreak. It's a searing, depressing journal of a long day's journey into madness: as Mabel Longhetti longs to be "herself," she flails about within a tribal, family-rooted sphere that leaves no place for such an identity. Cassavetes is still not as selective as he might be in the presentation of his material, but he's full of wisdom and compassion—and his stars provide the best acting in an American film this year. We can see and hear the explosions that go off inside Gena Rowlands' Mabel's head; as her hard-hat husband, Peter Falk bursts with feverish affection and a rage induced by emotional impotence.

The Godfather Part II Francis Ford Coppola's sequel to his first Mafia melodrama is one of the most obsessively personal large-scale epics ever to come out of Hollywood—a movie that moves outward and inward simultaneously, seeking to explore the earlier film even as it expands its narrative scope to take in three generations of Corleones and 70 years of American social history. Even the flaws of the film—the routine crime-war plot of its modern sections, the shortchanging of the family's interpersonal battles—are exhilarating, for they are creative itches which indicate that Coppola's talent is still a growing one. The Corleones can no longer contain the entirety of this filmmaker's imaginative outpouring: Coppola has broadened his vision to take in the full sweep of the greatest tides of our modern national life.

Top-notch screen acting has its own special rewards and is not necessarily found in the best movies. Besides those mentioned above, there were other performances worth catching this year, and they surfaced in films that ranged from the excellent to the shoddy. They included: Jon Voight (in *Conrack*), Blythe Danner (*Lovin' Molly*), Alan Bates (*Butley*), Giancarlo Giannini (*Love and Anarchy* and *The Seduction of Mimi*), Stephane Audran and Michel Piccoli (*Wedding in Blood*), Warren Beatty, (*The Parallax View*), Jack Nicholson (*Chinatown*), Richard Dreyfuss and Denholm Elliott (*The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*), Ellen Burstyn and Geraldine Fitzgerald (*Harry and Tonto*), Burt Reynolds (*The Longest Yard*), Dirk Bogarde and Charlotte Rampling (*The Night Porter*), Liv Ullmann and Erland Josephson (*Scenes from a Marriage*), Carroll O'Connor (*Law and Disorder*), Dustin Hoffman (*Lenny*) and Jean-Paul Belmondo and Charles Boyer (*Stavisky*—to be reviewed next issue).

In Mel Brooks' spectacularly unfunny new film, **Young Frankenstein**, some jokes fall flat, other jokes (just as bad) are repeated in the vague hope they'll prove to be running gags, other jokes (just as bad) are explained for us (just in case we're not paying attention), and still other jokes (the few good ones) are squandered through mis-presentation. What's going on here? Is this the same Mel Brooks who gave us "Springtime for Hitler" and a 2,000-year-old man who "never, ever touched fried foods"? The answer, I'm afraid, is yes—but this is a Mel Brooks with a difference. This Mel Brooks has become so confident in his ability to make people laugh (*Blazing Saddles* made him a mint) that he can't resist laughing himself; *Young Frankenstein* is the work of a comic who loves his own material to the extent that all self-criticism is suspended—and as soon as that kind of attitude begins to pervade comedy, comedy ceases to be funny.

Young Frankenstein is ostensibly a parody of horror movies, although its creator's desire to please all the people all the time leads him into a variety of humorous culs-de-sac that have nothing to do with the matters at hand. The few routines that deserve to work—especially a bit with Gene Hackman as a bumbling blind man and a bizzare soft-shoe number to the accompaniment of Irving Berlin's immortal "Puttin' on the Ritz"—don't to their fullest because the context is all screwed up. Brooks opens the film (shot in black and white) with some legitimate satirical shots meant to recall the B-movie clinkers we see on late night TV (a creepy house on a hill, a full moon passing through dark clouds, a clock frozen at midnight, etc.)—only to abandon this coherent fix on his concerns to accost us with a pointless sequence set in the U.S.A. (the rest is in Transylvania) and then with knockabout slapstick and dumb sex jokes. (Every Brooks film has a blond bombshell to be the butt of the latter variety of gags; this time the type has been blown up to the proportions of a major character, played by a lifeless Teri Garr.) Gene Wilder (who also co-wrote the screenplay) is back again, as the original Dr. Frankenstein's assimilated grandson, and carries his usually winning "hysterical" routine well beyond its natural limits; Kenneth Mars, the Nazi playwright of *The Producers*, is here, too, doing what he can with some recurring business involving an impenetrable German accent and an artificial limb. Cloris Leachman, as a severe Transylvanian castle-keeper, is all dressed up to be funny but has no place to go, in that her role is at best an undigested comic idea. Brooks doesn't give Madeline Kahn, screamingly Dietrich-Teutonic in *Saddles* and here doing a variation on a character she played in Bogdanovich's *What's Up, Doc?*, any room to breathe; she's often upstaged by her noisy co-stars—especially Peter Boyle, who, in a good rendition of the monster, gets to light two cigarettes à la Paul Henreid after plying Kahn with his super-stud services.

Aside from its opening moments, the film looks terrible. Brooks has paid no attention to his own comic rhythms, and loses some laughs simply because he doesn't bother to point them up in the camera work or the editing. Since he's too out of control to stick to the focus of his satire, *Young Frankenstein* is never as funny as the movies it seeks to plunder. The only personality linking this film together is that of a self-indulgent adolescent who prides himself on being the class cutup and is intent on playing to the crowd's lowest common denominator. The Mel Brooks we knew and loved turned the manifestations of sheer panic into a rap of genius. Success has robbed him of that panic, or at least fermented it into fat.

Like Noah's Ark, Irwin Allen's thunderous follow-up to *The Poseidon Adventure*, **The Towering Inferno**, has two of everything: based on two novels (one of which has two authors) and financed by two Hollywood studios, this film additionally boasts two directors (Allen for the "action," John Guillermin for the talk scenes), two cinematographers and two editors. Indeed, the picture goes so far as to end with a flood—but there comparisons must end, for even God doesn't think as big as Irwin Allen when it comes to pestilence.

An evening with *Inferno* is like a week at an amusement park (and, at over two and a half hours, seemingly as long);

it's a series of harmless, mechanical roller-coaster rides, all centering around a raging fire that engulfs a 138-story San Francisco skyscraper on the night of its official celebrity opening. Glass windows burst (though, mercifully, we don't see the splinters poke out any eyes on the streets below), elevators toast their occupants to a crisp, human torches spiral from lofty altitudes into the night, and whole office suites explode like popcorn; meanwhile, in the top floor restaurant, the wealthy celebrities stop drinking their Romanée-Conti '29 and drift into panic.

Much of this film looks exactly like Allen's previous enterprise (the tower's party room is a double for that of the good ship Poseidon), but most of the effects are all new. They're damn good, and, if you're in the market for this kind of entertainment (and who isn't on some rainy night?), this is the best disaster film that money could conceivably buy. Paul Newman, the skyscraper's architect, and Steve McQueen, a diligent fire chief, lend the project an ersatz dignity that the pseudo-stars of Universal's competitive efforts (*Airport 1975, Earthquake*) didn't begin to provide. There are other stars, too—William Holden (a venal magnate who, rather disconcertingly, talks and gestures like Jack Benny), Fred Astaire and Jennifer Jones (a class above *Poseidon*'s Jack Albertson and Shelley Winters), Faye Dunaway (in a near walk-on) and Richard Chamberlain (doing a ludicrous and possibly unintentional burlesque of the nutsy playboy he did so well in *Petulia*). As is standard in such films, these stars survive the holocaust under an actuarial scheme that places their prospects for longevity in direct proportion to the size of their billing.

Depending on how you look at it, Stirling Silliphant's screenplay is the work of either a bitter, cynical hack or a well-intentioned post-lobotomy patient. The movie's lines are so absurd ("She's still such a child," laments a mournful mom about her daughter. "She doesn't even know where we keep the key to the safe-deposit box") that it's impossible to tell whether Silliphant is trying to write camp, social satire or nonsense. No matter—the script is no more crucial to an Irwin Allen project than it is to a porn loop. *The Towering Inferno* gives us a vivid body count that approaches 200, and that's what counts: it deserves to be—and with any luck will be—the last word in junk movies.

Newman and McQueen in *The Towering Inferno*: ersatz dignity.

Even for those of us unreconstructed Bond fans **The Man with the Golden Gun** is a cause to be glum; God knows what those who've been turned off by 007's shenanigans for years will make of this curiously joyless effort. Although old Bond hands such as director Guy Hamilton and screenwriters Richard Maibaum and Tom Mankiewicz are once more at their tasks, this film can't hold a candle to its immediate predecessors, *Diamonds are Forever* and *Live and Let Die*. Its desperation is numbing—even the plot is essentially a reworking of the glinting, phallic imagery of *Goldfinger*. Without a spunky story, the standard Bond devices—sexist gags, xenophobic deployments of blacks and Orientals, whopping puns, convenient coincidences and last-minute cataclysms (no match for those of the disaster films)—look threadbare, and Roger Moore, a zero personality, can't provide the sparks the material lacks. Christopher Lee does make for a decent villain—one with a silly smile and one breast nipple too many—and Britt Ekland is a fitting Bond heroine, entertaining women's lib notions that are easily abandoned as soon as the opportunity presents itself. The cracker sheriff (Clifton James) of *Live and Let Die* returns—incongruously enough since the film is set in the Far East—and the pleasant diversions he provided last time around are reprised so strenuously that one wishes someone would finish him off with one of the many golden bullets floating around the action. In its teasing attitude toward sex (even at a strip show, we see no tits), its fascination with *Playboy*-style mechanical doodads, and its faith in an urbane superhero, *The Man with the Golden Gun* continues to recall the Kennedy era that was Ian Fleming's heyday—but now more than ever does that happy, simpler time seem long ago and far away.

Smack in the tawdry tradition of *Busting* and *S*P*Y*S* comes **Freebie and the Bean,** in which two more talented actors, James Caan and Alan Arkin, go down to ignoble defeat as undercover intelligence men (this time for the San Francisco police). This very loud comedy (directed by Richard Rush and written by Robert Kaufman)—if that's what it is—had been kept in a can for a while since its completion and should have remained there in perpetuity. Boring, incoherent and cinematographically washed out (by Laszlo Kovacs, sad to say), *Freebie* compounds its insurmountable flaws by being offensive to women, gays and Puerto Ricans. It's also full of gratuitous violence, and far too much of its action transpires in bathrooms. If I were Caan or Arkin or Valerie Harper (who put in a cameo in her pre-Cinderella days), I'd try to buy back the print, which, judging from the way the movie looks, couldn't set them back much more than 20 bucks.

MUSIC

When Randy Newman flares up, he doesn't fool around

By Janet Maslin

Randy Newman doesn't have to worry about going too far because he's pretty sure it's already happened. But sometimes he wonders exactly when he most flagrantly crossed the line between satire and ostensible psychosis. Was it in "Yellow Man," the song about life in China that might have set international relations back several thousand years if only Newman had been popular enough to get any airplay? Or was it later, with *Sail Away,* the album that was both masterpiece and commercial breakthrough? The title cut had a slave recruiter in Africa exhorting a "little wog" to visit the U.S.A. ("You'll just sing about Jesus and drink wine all day/It's great to be an American"); "Burn On," about the polluted Cuyahoga River, coined the exclamation "Cleveland, city of light, city of magic!" "Political Science" suggested we "drop the Big One and see what happens." In "God's Song," Newman (as "a nasty, horrible, California God") mused: "You all must be crazy to put your faith in me." And in "Old Man," which Newman considers his cruelest song, the singer gently but relentlessly convinced a senior citizen of his obsolescence: "Don't cry, old man, don't cry/Everybody dies."

Actually, it's Newman's latest outrage that may be his most extreme, perhaps because the song "Rednecks" is so prone to being misunderstood. The introduction sounds distinctly anti-Southern, as the slow-witted cracker narrator complains about having watched Lester Maddox being humiliated on nationwide television by "some smart-ass New York Jew." (The "Jew" is Dick Cavett; Newman thinks it's "funny for a Southerner to make that kind of mistake, thinking everyone in the media is Jewish.") Then comes a chorus potentially offensive to everyone from Dixie, be they black or white ("We're rednecks, we're rednecks/We don't know our ass from a hole in the ground/We're rednecks, we're rednecks/Keeping the niggers down"). The final verse, a sardonic account of how "the North has set the nigger free," reeling off a list of Northern black ghettos, makes it clear where Newman's sympathies ultimately lie: not quite anywhere.

Good Old Boys, the album that "Rednecks" kicks off, was formally introduced at a Warner Brothers shindig in Atlanta. A 90-piece orchestra, featuring Randy on piano and his Uncle Emil conducting (Emil Newman, like Randy's other uncles, Alfred and Lionel, has an impressive string of movie-score credits), performed the complete opus at the local symphony hall, while ushers handed out formal programs and the white collegiate audience snuck covert glances at the handful of blacks in the house, just to see how they were taking it. All things considered, they took it better than Randy did; he may have gotten through the concert well enough (wearing jeans and a cowboy shirt, and apologizing profusely to the members of the orchestra for making them dress up), but at the subsequent reception he seemed sullen and beleaguered. Repeatedly asked what had motivated him to write about the South, and having politely parroted his standard answer ("Well, I grew up in New Orleans, so I guess . . .") one time too many, he discreetly buzzed off early in the evening. Meanwhile, Warners' brass ran interference for Randy's wife and mother, who were in danger of being cornered by a nice young man from *Rolling Stone* every time the brass blinked. The mood was one of discomfort, the prevailing concern that of not upsetting Randy—and not because he's a prize breadwinner or a prima donna, either. They just *like* him, Warners does, and they like to keep him happy.

Newman: between satire and psychosis.

Several weeks later he was in Boston, where "Rednecks" is verboten on even underground stations because of the local busing situation. With an opened biography of Hitler on his coffee table ("the thing about him is that most people don't see past the moustache"), Newman allowed as how "Rednecks" might really be as scathing as he ever wants to get, not to mention a hard act to follow. "I've written that same type of song quite a few times, where a real crass kind of person is talking. This one's a little different, a little more complicated, but it's awfully raw. I can't tell if I'm writing any better now, either. I don't know if 'Rednecks' is any better than 'God's Song,' for instance. I don't know whether, song for song, *Good Old Boys* is any better than *Sail Away.*

"Now I do know that 'God's Song' is a very good song; I know that 'Rednecks' and 'Marie' are, on this album. 'Sail Away' is good; 'Old Man' I like a great deal—I may hype myself more than it deserves, but I like that one a lot. But when it comes to other types of songs, some of the crowd-pleasers like 'Guilty' or 'I Think It's Going To Rain Today'—well, I still do 'em, but I'm not crazy about all that whining."

Newman's material divides into three basic genres, the nastiest of which has generally attracted the most attention—perhaps because it's clearer, simpler, harder to fathom but easier to understand. "Oh you think so, huh?" remarks the author. "You know what some English writer said about me once, about 'Political Science'? '*I hope he's kidding*!' "

The only songs in which Newman seems *not* to be, to some degree, kidding are his most openly maudlin love songs ("Marie," "Living Without You") and idyllic daydreams ("Rollin'," "Dayton, Ohio—1903"). These works present a tender, gentle Randy who bears almost no resemblance to Randy-on-the-road, a witty, highly opinionated and occasion-

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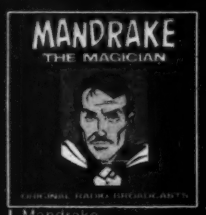

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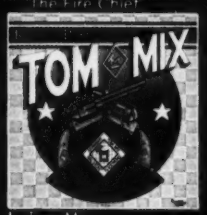

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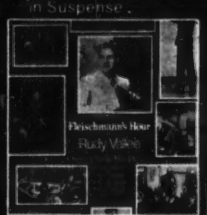

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ally very hot-tempered individual. It was this other Randy who gave an interview in England years ago during which "the guy kept picking at me, what do you think of this, of that, until I eventually broke down." What he broke down and said was that he "thought Paul Simon's songs were garbage" (that observation became the headline for the story). His opinion of Simon has improved considerably, but "at the time I just hated all that sophomoric crap about ambling through the meadows and sounds of silence and all that shit. I hated it all out of proportion to the way I *should* have hated it." These days, the only grudge he bears against Simon– whom he doesn't know–is "his height. I don't think you can trust anyone that short. I was telling a guy on the radio once that I thought they ought to eliminate all men under 5'6", 5'7", since they cause nothin' but trouble in the world 'cause they're all so nervous about their height."

He doesn't get tough very often, but when Randy flares up he doesn't fool around. For instance: "I was going to vote the other day and these two big guys, they asked me the time. And I told them what time it was *and they didn't say thank you.*" He had a fit, shouted some unprintables, and yet managed to stroll out of the polling place without a scratch. "I got off easy that time–but it's coming, I'm going to be killed. The last sound I hear will be 'Haiii!' and it'll be over."

And so much for gentle, sensitive Randy. It would be nice to be able to report that at least he somehow matches up with that third type of character he writes about, but even that correlation falls flat: there doesn't seem to be much of him in the exhibitionist purse-snatcher ("Naked Man"), the seducer full of "macho bullshit" ("You Can Leave Your Hat On"), or the shy rapist who plans to jump out of the bushes, "hoping to catch [his victim's] eye" ("Suzanne"). No, Newman contends that he's not one inch a loony, and that while he may be retiring he's hardly shy. He just likes to stay home a lot, keeping to himself, watching television. His wife stays home too: "It's like we've been married five, ten times longer than we actually have, because we're together all the time.

"But that's all right, we get along with no trouble. When I'm doing nothing, she's doing stuff–she's German, you know? She really can't turn it off too well. But she's getting better at it, I'm beginning to drag her down. 'Don't do that, leave it for later'–she's beginning to slip a little, after years of assiduous housely duties, taking the kids here and there. But she's been playing tennis with her friends now, she's actually out there with friends and everything. I'll fix that."

So what of the tormented, ambiguous creature that critics (whom Randy never reads) so often attempt to analyze? (One review of *Good Old Boys* painted him as a deeply troubled person, pointing out the album's repeated references to alcohol.) "Well I'm not troubled and I don't drink, and for a long time now I haven't even been guilty. Guilt used to be what got me to work, but this time I overcame it. So after *Sail Away* I just spent two years doing nothing at all, and it didn't bother me a bit. I was in financial trouble, everything was collapsing around me, everyone was real worried. Lenny [Waronker, Newman's producer] would call and say gotta get to work, Jesus it's been two years. And my wife was saying we owe this money, these taxes; all kinds of bad stuff was happening, attaching bank accounts, no money coming in, scruffling around. I didn't like that feeling, I have to admit. But it didn't motivate me to change my ways at all."

Randy admits to being slightly more worried now than usual, if only because it's hard to imagine what could top *Good Old Boys*' daring or its excellence. And, yes, he *is* beginning to experience slight pangs of dread at the prospect of "having to go in there and lock myself up for long enough to come out with something. That's one thing that never changes, the mood I'm in when I'm writing. It's kind of, uh, desperate."

*** Goodnight Vienna,** *Ringo Starr* (Apple). The nicest Beatle, the least inventive Beatle, the shortest Beatle, the one who walked off with the Mr. Congeniality prize, proves that, even with producer Richard Perry repeating his role as mastermind-for-hire, Ringo's initial solo success was mostly a fluke. Flat and muzaky; only the zaniest cuts (like Allan Toussaint's "Occapella") have half a chance.

*** Another Time, Another Place,** *Bryan Ferry* (Atlantic). Title apparently refers to last winter, when Ferry released an interestingly conceived, not so interestingly executed collection of radically revised oldies. What with the novelty worn off, and with Ferry's initial affection for his material having soured into condescension, this follow-up has little to recommend it save the cover photo, which has Ferry in a white dinner jacket sulking at poolside, like the only rebel at a debutante ball.

*****Al Green Explores Your Mind** (Hi). Well, not exactly. But he does serve up a pretty solid collection, as usual, that's only occasionally marred by excessive schmaltz. Best cuts: "One Nite Stand" and "Hangin' On."

BOOKS

Oilberg

By Geoffrey Wolff

Supership *by Noël Mostert.* Knopf (332 pp., $8.95).

In the economics of greed, only short-term profits and losses are counted. Before the 1967 closing of the Suez Canal–to the whines and moans of industrialized nations–it cost $3.29 to carry a ton of crude oil from Kuwait to Rotterdam, through the canal, in an 80,000-ton tanker. Now a 200,000 tonner carries the oil, via the long route around the Cape of Good Hope, for less than $2.40 per ton. And the Suez Canal has become even less interesting than small tankers.

The bigger the tanker, the cheaper the price per ton for carrying oil. So inviolable has this principle become that while the biggest tanker afloat in 1956 carried 45,000 tons, the biggest afloat today carries 476,292 tons, and there is serious talk of building a hulk huge enough to carry a million and a quarter tons. For the formula–*bigger-cheaper-better*–to function, certain economies must be practiced. The tanker

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must be built with speed and for the lowest possible price, and never mind the quality control. Supertankers are designed to be written off in 10 years, and a single round trip from Europe to the Persian Gulf and back has been known to recover one-third the cost of a 200,000 tonner. They are built with one engine rather than two, radically depriving the ship of its maneuverability and stopping power (it requires 3 miles to bring a tanker traveling at 16 knots to rest), but saving the shipowner money. By building only a single boiler for the ship's steam turbine (the *Queen Mary* had 27), more money can be saved, at a terribly increased risk of utter breakdown and eventual breakup and oil spill on some coast or other. Indeed, so cheapjack and unseaworthy are these ships that in a single three-month stretch, 326 tanker accidents were reported, so insurance premiums now amount to more than half the cost of operating a supertanker.

No statistical summary of Noël Mostert's elegant, knowing story can suggest its urgency, or sadness, or anger. Like a sea dream of drowning, it proceeds to the depths of greed with langor and great beauty, and the dreamer shakes himself awake bone dry. But *Supership*, an ugly title perfectly suited to such an ugly thing as it describes, is no mere nightmare or portent. It is a description of a continuing catastrophe that is upon us, that may be irreversible.

"All crude oils are poisonous to all marine organisms." Begin with that proposition, realize that as much as 6 million tons of oil is let loose upon the sea every year (because of leaks, or collisions, or groundings, or tank cleanings), and that more than half the earth's food manufacture by plants occurs in the same Southern ocean, which is most grievously polluted by oil, and it is no far jump to Mostert's fear that the multiple evils of supertankering perhaps represent "man's most single calamitous act." An act that will continue till the earth runs out of oil, or till the sea dies, and man with it.

Short-term profits run us all. Oil greases our wheels, gives us plastics, fabrics, medicine, the very bounty of our days. No one, least of all Mostert, denies its value or belittles its unique properties, or suggests that it can be replaced easily—or perhaps at all—by something else. He says it plainly: "Nothing else does more for man." Everyone wants oil, and everyone wants Middle Eastern oil, "and they'll pay any price, cash, moral or otherwise for it, as we saw in the October war and after. But should they be allowed to have it at the rate they want it?" The word *rate* here does double service: should they have as much as they want, and as cheap as they want it? If the answer to both questions was "no," perhaps we would learn that oil is too precious (because it is finite) to be blown out the exhaust pipes of automobiles, and too costly (because too dangerous) to be carried casually across oceans with no principle of regulation beyond the principle of freight price per ton, the principle of greed.

For greed there is perhaps no remedy. For the slipshod construction of huge ships there are many remedies, which cost only money. For the slipshod navigation of huge ships there are also remedies and innovations available to the ships' owners, and to the countries whose seas and coasts are put in peril by oilbergs. Most cost money, and all would author many complicated regulations. Mostert hypothesizes that the coastal electronic guidance of ships through busy waters will soon come into general usage, much as the navigation of aircraft in crowded corridors is accomplished by airport control towers. By placing an upper limit on the size of supertankers, the world could be saved from a million-ton spill. By putting some kind of international maritime policeman aboard every tanker, the illegal flushing of tanks (which together with leakage causes the gravest damage to the sea and its coasts) might be radically reduced.

Supership provokes shame and fear in liberal measure, but so well is it knit, so fine is its filigree, that its principal product is admiration for a sad song handsomely sung. Mostert's prose inclines toward Jacobean ripeness, the full, all-stops-pulled sonority of Melville and Conrad. It is an instrument whose use can only be justified by such high theater as calamity and sea-borne ruckus. The translation of insurance rates, freight tables, shipbuilders' statistics and economic trade-offs into a mighty sea yarn has shown off Mostert's extraordinary organizational skill and his lifelong affection for things that live in the sea and move upon it.

The book is built around a voyage taken by Mostert aboard the 200,000 tonner *Ardshiel*, a well-run tanker in the service of the P & O Line, from Rotterdam to the Persian Gulf. These ships are usually spare, and often sloppily run, but aboard *Ardshiel* the crew is pampered, and officers dine wearing black dress trousers and silk cummerbunds. They're served by Goanese stewards, and their food is elegant. They live in ample staterooms, some of them in suites. But they feel no affection for their work or their ship, which is no mistressly *she* but rather an employerly *it*. There are no stops en route (*Ardshiel* draws more than 90 feet, and few ports could accommodate it; even were it otherwise, time is money, so there is no time to be spent on human affairs). During "the longest unbroken sea voyages that sailors have been employed upon since the days of sail," movies are shown, the same movies, again and again, and the least popular of them all has been Stanley Kubrick's *2001*, which shows man as the prisoner of his engines' needs, misguided by his inventions of guidance, and undone by them.

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Walter Lippmann was not an oracle—just a great journalist

FINAL TRIBUTE

By Harrison E. Salisbury

When a man like Walter Lippmann dies it is important to define as quickly and clearly as possible the nature of his legacy before the myth-builders begin their work. Lippmann never seemed to me a great philosopher nor even a great moralist but something which in our times is even more important—a great journalist.

It was Lippmann's gift (and it was a talent which became keener with the years) to cut through the murk of public debate and expose the true heart of the matter with extraordinary clarity. He made the complex clear. He had a sense for the jugular of issues and the soft underbelly of politicians.

If he was inconsistent—and every man in daily journalism is certain to be—this did not deeply trouble him because he was not writing for the ages but for tomorrow morning's newspaper. He understood that the hazard of the daily deadline could prove him wrong no matter how elegant his prose—and it was as elegant as any in his time—or how penetrating his insights.

I think Lippmann's greatest quality was a profound skepticism about public men and an absolute conviction in the enduring worth of the American democratic system.

He never confused the man with the office. The historical accidents that put Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge into the White House did not endow them in Lippmann's mind with presidential stature. He understood the weaknesses—and strengths—of Herbert Hoover. He was fond of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the charming young aristocrat, but perceived his weaknesses. He saw no presidential characteristics in Mr. Truman but came to admire his courage if not his judgment. From the beginning he sensed that General Eisenhower had retired into the White House, taking it as an honorific rather than a responsibility.

Lippmann was not so blinded by Kennedy charm that he failed to sense there were some hollow spaces behind the facade. He could not abide the Big Texanism of Lyndon Johnson nor the machismo war to which Johnson committed the country.

Johnson and the Johnsonian atmosphere in Washington drove Lippmann out of the capital. Lippmann was a civilized man and, as he explained once to me, "I simply can't stand Washington. It's impossible to breathe or think in the place."

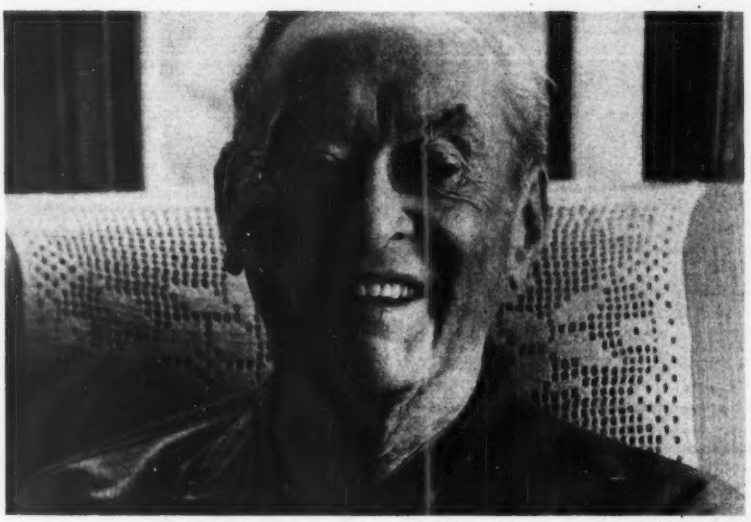
Possibly it was Lippmann's intense revulsion for Johnson that led to his flirtation with Richard Nixon, a man for whom he had little respect. This was one of the rare occasions when Lippmann's sturdy realism about presidents failed him, probably because he believed so strongly in the Nixon detentes with Russia and China.

In his lifetime there was, actually, only one president to whom Lippmann gave personal and intellectual devotion—Woodrow Wilson—but even here Lippmann well knew Wilson's limitations.

If Lippmann had summed it up I think he would have said that it was the strength of the American system and the genius of its founders which enables the country to survive the sometimes mediocre, often petty, rarely well qualified men whom we almost invariably elect as our presidential leaders.

Lippmann was not an oracle and, as his native doubt over the qualifications of public men demonstrated, he shunned oracles and the oracular touch. His genius was the ability to view the Emperor without clothes and to penetrate the cant and expose the inner nerves of selfish national aspiration or a statesman's posturing.

It was not for nothing that the midwife who introduced Lippmann to journalism was Lincoln Steffens, the great American muckraker. Not many saw in the quiet of Lippmann's voice, the restraint of his prose, the classic leanness of his logic the child of the most flamboyant and "anti" period of American journalism, the era of *McClure's* magazine, of Ida Tarbell, of Upton Sinclair and Steffens. But Lippmann was, indeed, a true muckraker—a muckraker on the global scale, a man who knew that the conventions of diplomacy were only a costume and who understood that when statesmen prepare to commit genocide they come to the green baize table in striped pants and morning coats. ●



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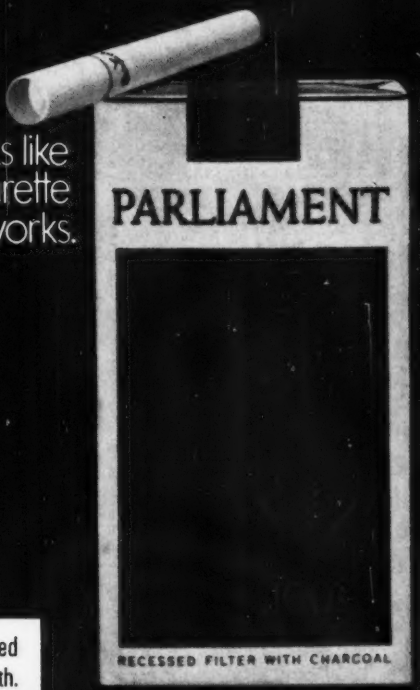

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